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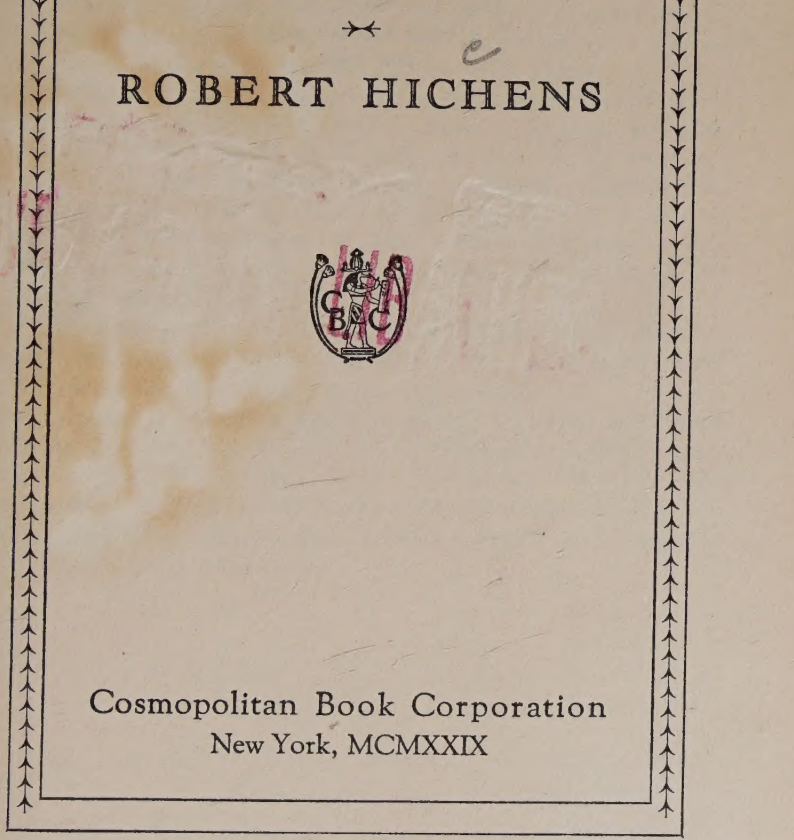

ROBERT HICHENS

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Author's Note

When writing "Doctor Artz," which is not founded on fact and the characters of which are wholly imaginary, I had no intention of covertly attacking certain great doctors of Vienna and elsewhere, who in the last ten or twelve years have by their discoveries and operations done so much to prolong the happiness of life, the vitality of the body, the vigor of the mind, for those who were beginning to feel, sometimes tragically, the burden of age. The Steinach operation has been of wonderful benefit to many men, some of them famous. And many women have gone to Vienna in misery and come away rejoicing and full of renewed hope.

My story deals not with a self-sacrificing and ardent scientist, but with a man undoubtedly clever who has a twist in his nature which renders him dangerous to certain people.

Methods of so-called rejuvenation in the wrong hands may bring, probably have brought, about much misery both of mind and of body. What is done by the great Steinach in Vienna and by others, in America and Europe, who have learned his secrets and who follow his directions, benefits humanity and commands my ungrudging admiration.

DR. ARTZ

I

"THE career of a public singer, especially of an opera singer, is horribly difficult," said Mrs. Simon doubtfully, in her soft and languid voice, a voice which one couldn't imagine issuing from the lips of a poor woman.

"Why?" asked Miss Vyvyan, almost with a touch of hostility. "Why should it be more difficult than any other career in the arts? I can't see any reason. But whatever one wants to do, or to help others to do, the cry goes up, 'It's so difficult. Don't attempt it.' When you go to Covent Garden it is to listen to great opera singers. There they are! They had to get there. They have got there. They can't last forever. Others must take their places. Why shouldn't Pauline Iselle be one of those others? I can't see that it's impossible if she's helped. I've done my best. I made up my mind that I would never mention her name to you till I'd taken her as far as I could. I found her absolutely raw. She knew nothing. She'd been nowhere, hadn't a single friend of social importance or culture. But I detected the lark in her. I'm so certain of Pauline's capacities that if I had a little more money I'd pay for the whole of her training myself."

"I'm sure you would, you enthusiastic dear. But you are certainly not in a position to help this Pauline Iselle in that way. By the way where did she get her name?"

"From her people, of course."

"And what are they?"

"Her father's an actor."

"A successful one?"

"He acts very well—in certain parts."

"What parts?"

"Anything grotesque. He's out of an engagement for the moment."

"Ah! And her mother?"

"Her mother is very good-looking. She's an American. Pauline's father met her when he was in America looking for an engagement. When she was very young I believe she sat as an artist's model."

"Oh!"

"She has great charm, and so has Pauline. The father is a marvelous mimic. He actually made me believe there was a pig in the room once when I called to see Pauline."

"Clever, but hardly luring. Are they poor?"

"The mother's got a little money but—yes, they are. Otherwise I shouldn't be trying to find help for Pauline."

"And how much longer would it take to train her?"

"For opera?"

"Yes, if that's the idea."

"Three years more. Not a day less. She has a naturally placed voice. She sings as easily as a bird. There's nothing to get rid of in her voice. I've seen to that. But of course she needs severe training for grand opera by a first-rate maestro. She has to be given 'readings,' to study rôles, to perfect herself in languages. I've taught her some French. But of course she must learn Italian. Then there's gesture—oh, lots of things! And besides, she is quite ignorant of life. She's a mere child."

"How old?"

"Just twenty, but she looks and seems like eighteen. Her innocence is that of a flower."

"Let us hope so."

"How cynical you are, Miriam!"

"And how deliciously unworldly you are, Naomi! Well, I'll promise nothing, but if you like to bring little Miss Iselle to be looked at you can—next Sunday. But not before five-thirty. I'm going to the Albert Hall concert that day."

"Of course! Heckner is conducting."

"Yes, Ilidor is conducting."

"I suppose he won't be—"

But at that moment the door of the Smith Square drawing-room was opened and a footman announced:

"Mr. Kharleel I-bra-him."

Miss Vyvyan got up to go as a handsome tall young Egyptian came in carrying a big bunch of roses.

Mrs. Simon introduced him to her friend, and Khalil looked with some surprise at the thin trim figure, the mannish costume, close-cropped gray hair and wrinkled intelligent face that confronted him. Then Miss Vyvyan went away. She was too intent about her young protégée just then to bother about an Egyptian stranger.

II

"I MUST warn you Ilidor, that there's a London sparrow coming to chirp to me this afternoon when I get home," said Mrs. Simon behind the scenes at the Albert Hall on the following Sunday afternoon, to a small, smart well-made man with clever satirical eyes, a little pointed black beard, subtle hands, and a large head closely covered with smooth black hair. "If you can't stand it I won't keep you to your promise."

Mr. Heckner tapped his baton lightly against the soft palm of his left hand. He looked terribly vital and yet abstracted, like a man listening to something at a distance.

"They like it as *I* give it them," he said. "The old 'Tannhäuser' overture made almost new! But the brass is better in Berlin—like the voice of God. Over here—"

"They want you back, sir," said a young man, hurrying up. "Won't you go on, sir? It's getting late and they're very obstinate."

"Obstinate, are they? The unmusical English!"

"Don't forget you're half English yourself," said Mrs. Simon.

"My dear, I'm half Russian and you're a Jewess. We have a right to be musical."

"If you will just show yourself once more, sir, I think perhaps—"

Heckner drew up his figure, pushed out his chest, and looked suddenly commanding. "I'll come in spite of the London sparrow," he said to Mrs. Simon. "But if she tries to chirp I shall stop her. Chimney-pot music isn't for me." And he disappeared, walking slowly, very upright, and still carrying his baton.

Mrs. Simon waited, wrapped up in chinchilla. It was a cold spring that year, and she was a chilly creature in the body and often wondered why she lived perpetually in London. But she was a bad traveler. Just forty-five she was delicate, felt herself fragile, looked almost transparent. Every time she went as far as Paris—this happened two or three times every year—she asked herself why she did it when there were quite good dressmakers in London now. It was a stupid habit—this going to Paris. She must break herself of it. But then wouldn't she become dreadfully insular? She dreaded insularity unreasonably, for she would forever be saved from it by her Jewishness. The oriental would always be in her.

"The English really are obstinate," said Heckner, coming back with glittering eyes. "But I've got rid of them. I told them to go because I'd had enough of it. They looked surprised, but they obeyed. Really, you know, they've got quite good manners over here, golfers though they be."

A moment later Mrs. Simon and Heckner were in a limousine speeding towards Knightsbridge. When they reached the big house in Smith Square, the butler informed Mrs. Simon that two ladies were waiting in the drawing-room.

"They're here already!" said Mrs. Simon to Heckner. "Now be nice to them. Don't be a monkey."

"Am I ever a monkey?"

"Very often, more often than not. It doesn't matter about Naomi. She can take care of herself. But this girl is quite young, and Naomi says she knows nothing of the world and is as innocent as a flower."

"How awful! Innocence is so difficult to deal with. However, I'll do my best."

They had reached the big landing on the first floor, and as he spoke he opened a door on the right and they heard Miss Vyvyan saying:

"I'm almost sure she'll bring back Heckner, the great conductor. If she does— What's the matter? Oh, Miriam! I didn't know you'd come back."

"How could you, seeing that you had your dear little back to the door? Is this Miss Iselle?"

"Yes. Pauline."

"I'm glad you were able to come. You must forgive us for being late. But Mr. Heckner—Mr. Heckner, my friend Miss Vyvyan, Miss Iselle—quite stupefied the Albert Hall audience with his reading of the Overture to 'Tannhäuser.'" While she spoke she was looking attentively at Miss Vyvyan's protégée, and saying to herself: "I'm sure she has Scandinavian blood in her."

There was, she thought, something strange and definitely Northern about the rather tall slip of a girl who stood before her, something out of the common, troubling, peculiar. She had a clear white skin, probably thick in texture, warmly white, pale yellow hair not cut short, much darker eyebrows above long silvery gray and, at this moment, rather sulky-looking eyes. There was decision in her chin, yet something almost touchingly girlish about the face as a whole and about the fluid figure.

"A Northern Mélisande!" murmured Heckner's voice in her ear.

Mrs. Simon said, "Do sit down. Come to the sofa, Naomi."

Heckner had at times strange powers of silence. And he didn't mind at all making people uncomfortable. Now he went away to a distant part of the big drawing-room, sat down in an armchair, leaned back and lit a cigar. "Must have a rest!" he threw at the three women negligently.

And he closed his glittering eyes. But in a very short time he opened them and looked across the shining parquet and the prayer rugs from Smyrna at the women by the tea table.

How thin and withered and close-cropped the little musical

spinster was! Above her masculine collar and tie her face showed almost like the screwed-up face of a monkey. The sap had gone out of her. But she looked wiry, agile, intensely alive. A touch of genius there, perhaps. Heckner had heard of her as a good concert pianist of the Madame Schumann school, classical, a thorough musician. Certainly she looked clever.

He caught her brown eyes fixed on him. Surely there was purpose in them.

"She wants something from me. I won't give it her."

He was perpetually being worried by people and, like most very successful men, had been forced to put on an armor of self-defense.

Miriam was an old love of his. Many suspected, some knew. He had taught her singing, or rather had given her "readings" when he was a young man with a studio in Mandeville Place before he had made his fame as a conductor. She had been a luxury child with a pretty voice and the artistic faculty so often to be found in the daughters of Israel. In music they had drawn very close to each other, too close for a husband's pleasure. But apparently Ludovic had never suspected.

When he died Miriam and Heckner were no longer lovers. They had moved away from passion and had come into a durable friendship.

Now she was being very charming in her soft unemotional way to the London sparrow, putting her "at her ease." But why London sparrow? To Heckner, Miss Iselle looked purely Scandinavian, one of those clear white and yellow girls who come out of the North, and who seem to hold an enigma in their stillness and their sometimes sulky grace.

A cloud seemed to fall over her. Miss Vyvyan had said something that had evidently vexed her. He was aware of a quickening of interest. But he saw Miss Vyvyan's searching brown eyes fixed on him again, and he shut his eyes and pulled hard at his cigar. After the Albert Hall concert he must rest. And anyhow he wasn't going to do it, whatever it was.

The drawing-room door opened and a small very thin old, and apparently very tired man came in. Some wisps of dyed

light hair were carefully brushed over his scalp. His smart clothes were loose, perhaps to conceal the astonishing meagerness of his slowly moving body. Out of a white face, that looked as if it had been "lifted," for there was a perceptible scar on either side of it near the ears, and it was too free from wrinkles, a pair of painfully brilliant eyes, with something of the reptile in them, gazed with tremendous definiteness. A very short dyed mustache defined the unusual size of a thin-lipped mouth, and a couple of inches of dyed whisker gave a touch of rather old-fashioned distinction to a Hebraic appearance which suggested the weariness of perpetually satisfied desires.

Miss Vyvyan sent an eager glance to Pauline. Mr. Leon Meyer! What a chance! What a wonderful chance!

And then of course Heckner was drawn in. For he was an old friend of the great banker, and it was Leon Meyer who had got him his first big job as conductor of the Italian opera season at Covent Garden.

Mrs. Simon introduced Mr. Meyer to Miss Iselle, and kindly added: "Miss Iselle is taking up singing in real earnest. She wishes to become a professional."

The fair girl colored and looked down. A sort of fierce reserve, which suggested outraged modesty, was evident in her just then. It was as if she wished to hide herself and her talent in some secret place. Miss Vyvyan began to explain.

While they spoke about Pauline, Heckner, pulling now and then at his impertinent beard, and watching the protégée's agony with amused slightly cynical eyes, was saying to himself, "She doesn't know! She doesn't know!" Indeed, as he looked at Pauline, he felt that he knew much more about her than her singing mistress knew. There were sulky depths—such sulky depths! And how the virgin in that young temple of silence was suffering!

Pauline became scarlet. Even her girlish neck was suffused with blood. Heckner said to himself, "It's a touching neck." And he longed to enclose it with his two hands. There was so much of youthfulness in it. Once, long ago, Miriam's neck had looked like that.

"It's only a question of getting the best training, the absolute best for her," Miss Vyvyan was saying earnestly. "The Italian method is still the only one, the pure *bel canto*."

"Is this young lady's voice a soprano or a contralto?" asked Heckner.

"Her voice is a high soprano, a lyric soprano."

Heckner turned to Pauline, who was still blushing.

"And what about will-power?" he asked her. "Have you got any? Do you intend to get there?"

"Of course Pauline intends to—"

"One minute! I was asking Miss Iselle. Have you made up your mind that you *will* be a success?"

Pauline lifted her head. Her chin seemed to become more decisive.

"I should like to try," she said.

She had a soft musical voice and spoke with a very slight cockney accent.

"Pauline," broke in Miss Vyvyan, "has made up her mind to—" Here she was stopped by the ruthless Heckner.

"We don't want this young lady explained to us any more," he said. "If you go on with it you will explain her away altogether. And that would be a tragedy. Any more words about her and she simply ceases to exist."

He sent a glance out of narrowed eyes at Miriam, and she just simply took Miss Vyvyan away. There was no subtlety in the matter. She got up and said: "Naomi, I want to have a little private talk with you about something you are interested in."

Miss Vyvyan got up. But as she passed Pauline with her springy walk she whispered something hastily in her ear, and the girl blushed again and moved uneasily. And once more the sulky look showed in her fair Scandinavian face. Then Miss Vyvyan followed Mrs. Simon towards a distant part of the large room, stepping sturdily in her neat black brogues.

"Why do you let her?" asked Heckner, when Miss Vyvyan was far enough away not to hear.

"Please—I—what do you mean? I don't understand."

"Yes, you do. Doesn't she, Mr. Leon."

Mr. Meyer, who had scarcely opened his lips since he had been in the room, but who had always looked alarmingly alert though bored, said in a voice without any "body" in it, but not disagreeable: "She interferes with your personality. If you ever hope to succeed you must never let anyone do that." He closed his white eyelids for an instant. (He had no eyebrows.)

"I wonder how much vitality you have," he said, opening them. "No one can be successful as an artist without unconquerable vitality."

"How can she show her vitality when she's being respectful to that little dried-up thing?" exclaimed Heckner.

"Miss Vyvyan has been very good to me," said Pauline, looking down and speaking in a reluctant, but determined voice. "I owe everything to her."

"Your hair, your eyes, your long throat?"

Leon Meyer smiled faintly at Heckner's questions.

"I mean, she has given me her time. She has taught me for nothing. She has believed in me."

"And you love her for it?"

"I am very very grateful to Miss Vyvyan."

"Shall we hear her, Mr. Leon? Shall we give her a chance?"

Mr. Meyer looked doubtful. He had heard so many great singers. All the operatic stars had come to sing in his house during at least forty years. Raw young girls could hardly give him pleasure—as singers. But something in his alarmingly vital eyes told Heckner that he loved to look at them. Yet wasn't it a tragedy when he looked at them?

"I don't mind," he said at last. "If Miss—Miss—"

"My name is Pauline Iselle," said Pauline, nervously.

Mr. Meyer stared at her. He went on staring. He looked like a thirsty man longing to put his lips to a glass of cool sparkling liquid. Heckner watched him, half smiling.

"How old are you?" said Mr. Meyer at last.

"Just twenty."

"Just—twenty!" He sighed. "Sing if you like," he said negligently, leaning back in his chair.

"No, it's if *we* like," said Heckner imperiously. "Come, Miss Pauline."

"Shall I call—"

"If you do I'll not hear you. I'll never hear you. To me you will be as one dead."

She looked frightened, but she got up with a sort of slavish air of obedience, and followed him to the grand piano which stood in an angle of the room. He sat down on the broad music seat and put his hands on either side to the screws.

"Hush! Don't do anything to attract her attention. Tell me now, what do you try to sing? Puccini?"

"Yes, yes!"

"Of course! *'Mi chiamano Mimi'!* We won't have it. Let's see." He paused, looking hard at her. "Do you try to sing Schubert? 'Hark, hark, the lark!' for instance?"

An expression of childlike astonishment transformed the girl's face and lit up her large Northern eyes.

"Why, now, however could you know that?" she exclaimed. "That's just wonderful though!"

A charming touch of America had come into her voice.

Softly he struck the piano.

"What's that?" Miss Vyvyan broke off her conversation and turned round. "Pauline! But I must—"

"Naomi, don't!"

"But she can't sing it unless I—"

"She is singing it without you. Hush!" Mrs. Simon leaned towards her. "Do you want me to help her?"

"Of course I do."

"Then don't interrupt or I won't—ever."

Miss Vyvyan sat rigid. But directly the song was over she got up decisively. "Now, Pauline—"

But Mrs. Simon took her by the arm. "Wait. He's going to test her. Listen."

"But I want him to hear her in Puccini. Mr. Heckner, Pauline can't sing Mozart yet. Let me play some Puccini."

"Don't talk to me of Puccini! Now begin again, Miss Iselle. And don't say *'Voy,'* say *'Vo-i.'* Now then! *'Vo-i che sapete'*—"

Miss Vyvyan sat down again.

"It's too bad!" she said, shaking her cropped head angrily. "All my rehearsing gone for nothing! She *can't* sing Mozart. What's he doing? There! He's broken her down! The accompaniment doesn't go like that. He's improvising. He's done it on purpose. Mr. Heckner! How *can* Pauline—"

But now Heckner was deep in conversation with the girl, who stood bending down with her eyes fixed on him. Leon Meyer was watching them both. There was a tragic expression on his horribly smooth face. Heckner played scraps of music while he talked: some bars from "Manon," from "Louise," Margaret's modest reply to the first greeting of Faust.

"Sing that!" he said presently.

"But she doesn't—" began Miss Vyvyan.

"Sing it!"

Pauline sang it. He made no comment but got up from the music seat. *"Basta!"* he exclaimed. And he went back to Leon Meyer, leaving Pauline standing doubtfully by the piano.

At once Miss Vyvyan left Mrs. Simon. Her look and manner proclaimed, "I'm going to take charge now."

"Now I'll show them what you *can* do, Pauline," she said. "Now you shall sing him *'Mi chiamano Mimi'* and then he'll see that—"

She began to play the air from "Bohème."

"Go on! Why don't you go on?"

"But he doesn't want to hear me in Puccini."

"Go on at once. We rehearsed this only yesterday."

Tears came into the girl's gray eyes. "But he hates Puccini."

"Then he hates what everyone else likes. Go on at once."

Pauline drew herself up with a childish effort. She was quivering but she tried to stiffen her young body. She opened her soft lips.

"Mi chiamano Mimi—"

She began to cry.

"My dear child! What's the matter?" asked Mrs. Simon, going quickly to the piano.

"I can't—when I know he hates Puccini."

It was like a cry from the voice of a sex, and it told Mrs. Simon a basic truth about the girl: that man must always have the pull over woman in her life. She knew that it isn't always so in the world of today, when woman often enough takes her stand by woman. But this was evidently the type of girl men secretly love best, the type with an instinct to yield to the male. There was in her a great softness for the male.

Miss Vyvyan had a dominating personality. She often got her way. For she was determined, fearless, and unselfconscious. Till now Pauline had been her thing in music. There had never been any struggle between them. Miss Vyvyan's will had been paramount. There was tragedy in this collapse under Heckner's glittering eyes. And the tragedy was the greater because probably he cared nothing for his triumph while Miss Vyvyan was smitten to the earth by her defeat.

She got up from the piano. "Well, Mr. Heckner, I hope you're satisfied. You've made her break down. Of course I could see you meant to from the first. That was your object and you've achieved it. We'd better go now. It's no use crying, Pauline."

"I'm not crying."

"Good-by, Miriam."

"But do stay a little longer."

"I'm sorry but I can't. It's getting late. Come, Pauline! Good-by, Mr. Meyer." She gave him her thin dry little hand. It was burning, feverish. "Good-by, Mr. Heckner." She didn't give her hand to him.

"Good-by, dear Miss Vyvyan. You make a great mistake, if I may say so, in exalting Puccini above Mozart."

This, as it was probably designed to do, brought a dry denial from Miss Vyvyan, in the midst of which the drawing-room door was opened, and the footman announced, "Mr. Khar-leel I-bra-him."

In the following silence the handsome Egyptian youth walked in. His dark eyes immediately fastened on Pauline, who was wiping her eyes with a small, very ordinary handkerchief.

"Come, Pauline!" There was tragedy in that summoning voice.

Miss Vyvyan walked out. The girl hesitated. Confusion was evident in her. She looked even dazed—derelict almost. Her silvery eyes rested for a moment on the face of the Egyptian, wonderingly, as if she couldn't understand why he was there, where he had sprung from. They seemed to ask for help, like an animal's eyes. Mrs. Simon came to the rescue.

"Good-by, dear. You'll come again. I want to see more of you."

"Thank you. You—you are kind."

She bowed, rather awkwardly like an unfledged schoolgirl, to Leon Meyer, then looked at Heckner. He came to her, grasped her hand, smiled into her eyes.

"We'll meet again. Don't sing too much Puccini. Tell us something before you go. Haven't you got some Danish, Swedish, or Norwegian blood in you?"

"Mother has. Her people are Swedish. But she's American. They settled in New York when she was only about seven. Her name was Ehrensward."

"Pauline!" And then she went.

III

THERE was an instant of silence when the door shut. It was broken by the young Egyptian, who said in excellent English: "How are you, Mrs. Simon? What a nice fair girl that was! But she had been crying. I thought the English never cried in public."

Mrs. Simon gave him her hand and introduced him to the two men.

Leon Meyer, who had made a great part of his vast fortune in Egypt, examined the newcomer, as he examined everyone whom he saw for the first time, with a sort of sharp care. But now he looked abstracted. His eyes went to the door.

Heckner smiled. "I shall have to go in a minute," he said. "The Music Club is giving me a dinner tonight."

"Oh, then . . ."

Mrs. Simon's eyes asked pardon of Khalil. "May we talk music for a moment?"

"Mais oui! Pourquoi pas? I love music."

"Before you go, Ilidor, tell us your real opinion of that girl. Naomi Vyvyan wants me to pay for her to be trained for opera. Is it any good?"

Heckner didn't answer. He sat still, looking satirical and yet thoughtful too.

"You haven't made up your mind?" asked Mrs. Simon.

"As far as she goes she isn't so bad," he said. "But she doesn't go very far."

"Surely it's a beautiful voice!"

"But out of the question for Wagner," said Mr. Meyer.

"Oh, of course, except perhaps Elsa and possibly Eva," said Heckner. "Yes, some day she might be a beautiful Eva!"

Suddenly a romantic look came into his eyes and he sang a few bars of Eva's music in the quintet from "The Meistersinger."

"Louise, too, Mélisande and—and Manon, with a lot of training, three or four years ahead."

"Then you do think it worth my while?"

"And Margaret in Gounod's old thing. But somehow it lasts. I can see her with a prayer-book and the devil at her elbow—the devil at her elbow." A look of evil came into his face.

"Evidently then you admire her," said Mrs. Simon, rather coldly.

"And don't you?" Mischief replaced the evil.

"She's a beautiful girl," said Khalil. "A very beautiful girl."

"But her voice, her voice! That is the point to consider."

"It's good enough to have a try with," said Heckner. And then he got up. "I must go. I must go."

"I will come with you," said Meyer, getting up, too, but wearily. "I can drive you to the Savoy, if you like."

"I wish you would."

"Yes, but you, Leon! You're a judge if anyone is outside of the profession. Do you believe that girl could be turned into an opera singer with a real chance of success?"

Meyer seemed to hesitate, to be thinking it over seriously. At last he said: "Character has a lot to say in the career of a public singer. I don't feel sure about that young girl's character."

"Sure?" said Mrs. Simon.

"Has she enough hardness? Has she enough caprice? Has she enough ambition? The voice is there, a light soprano so far, very true and flexible, I believe. There's a great deal of simplicity—apparently. With young girls one seldom knows. And there's some capacity of defiance"—he smiled faintly and moved the tip of his long curved nose—"where women are concerned. That girl will not be ruled by women. No. But has she the capacity to rule a crowd, a mixed crowd?"

"Perhaps she has a still very nice capacity," said Khalil Ibrahim.

"What capacity is that?" asked Mrs. Simon.

"The capacity to seduce," said Khalil, almost smacking his pouting lips over the last word.

Mrs. Simon said nothing, but her handsome face hardened. Heckner's eyes twinkled maliciously.

"Every woman should be able to seduce," he said. "But lots of women couldn't even seduce a schoolboy. That's a great tragedy for them in these days of not enough men. The crowd of women without seduction! A bonfire ought to be made of them. But you, dear patroness of the arts and the struggling artists"—he nearly kissed Mrs. Simon's small hand—"wouldn't be on that bonfire. No, no!"

He went away with Meyer. He had a rather tripping walk. Something of impertinence in it and tremendous self-possession.

When the door closed behind him Mrs. Simon had made up her mind about the question of payment for Miss Iselle's musical education.

IV

MISS VYVYAN did not take a refusal easily. She had plenty of sturdy determination in her character. And when a charming little note, affectionately worded, came to her from Mrs. Simon deciding against the project of paying for Pauline her will-power stood to arms.

She went at once to Pauline, arriving in Harriet Street soon after nine in the morning, and found the Iselle family in curl-papers.

Pauline was singing scales at an upright piano. She had on an old kimono and wore her yellow hair in two plaits like an old-fashioned German girl. In the adjoining room, which was divided from the front room by folding doors left partially open, Mrs. Iselle was stretched upon a small sofa near a gas fire, reading the Daily Mirror, with a Spanish shawl round her, and her bobbed light brown hair in disorder. Papa Iselle, whose Christian name was, alarmingly, "Wellesley," was seated at the breakfast table, collarless, but adorned with a remarkable smoking jacket of blue and brown check, sipping a cup of black coffee. The Era was propped against a cruet stand in front of him.

He was a lemon-colored man with light eyes, tall, slim, rather "waisty," whose handsome face was slightly spoilt by a too round nose. About him there floated a curious air of false youth. He wasn't old, not more than forty-six. He had clever eyes and he really was clever, but in a way that didn't lead to much. There was something lacking in him. He had no power to grip opportunity.

He heard Miss Vyvyan's voice in the front room and muttered a swear word. Mrs. Iselle looked up from "What Women Are Wearing."

"Fetch me a collar and tie will you, Ingrid? The left-hand top drawer. Don't make a row!"

"You shouldn't have tried to sing Mozart when you haven't mastered *bel canto* and can't pronounce Italian properly."

"But you let me sing Mimi in Italian."

"But I've drilled you in every syllable. Anyhow this is what I have to tell you. Miriam—Mrs. Simon—has refused to pay for your operatic education. Of course she consulted Heckner and he told her that you would never make an opera singer. I could see he was against us from the first. But I'm not going to give in."

"That's it, Ingrid! Let me get to the glass!"

"A little man get the better of me, even if he is a good conductor! I shall tackle Miriam—Mrs. Simon—again. I won't take no for an answer. I've made up my mind you're to be trained for opera, and I'll carry it through one way or another. But one thing I must stipulate for. There must be no more defiance of my authority. You always think you know better than I do. And now see what it's led to! An absolute refusal to— Oh, Mr. Iselle! I didn't know you were there."

"I fancied I heard your voice, so I thought I must give you a greeting. Are you spoiling our little girl?"

"Well, perhaps hardly that. I've been telling her—" She repeated and amplified all she had already said. "But I'm going again to Mrs. Simon," she came to at last, "and I shall take Pauline with me. She shall hear you in Puccini with my accompaniment and then—"

"No, please, Miss Vyvyan! I can't have her asked again, and I don't like singing Puccini. Mr. Heckner doesn't—"

Miss Vyvyan began to look ominous. "It comes to this," she said, and the wrinkles in her little face worked. "Pauline must choose between Mr. Heckner and me."

"But of course, dear Miss Vyvyan—"

"No—no. I'll have no divided authority. If I'm not good enough for my advice to be taken I wash my hands of the whole business. Go to Mr. Heckner and see if he'll take the trouble I've taken, or any trouble at all. I know these musicians. Go to him, Pauline. Tell him I've dropped you and you want to put yourself in his hands, and then see what he'll say to you."

"But of course I can't go to him," said the girl, almost in

tears. "I only meant—" In despair the girl turned to her father. "Daddy, do help me. Whatever I do seems wrong."

Mr. Iselle assumed a pathetic expression that was dreadfully insincere. "Don't be too down on the kid, Miss Vyvyan. You're her Providence. She's got a simply tremendous opinion of you. Haven't you, kid?"

"Yes," said Pauline, but as if with a secret reluctance.

"If that is so," said Miss Vyvyan, with sudden dignity, mingled with a faintly sketched pathos, "do you, or do you not, leave yourself definitely in my hands, Pauline?"

There was a pause.

"You hear, kid?" said Mr. Iselle, at length breaking it.

"Yes, daddy."

"Well, what's your answer? You know the family situation."

Pauline clasped one hand with the other, looked down and moved her right foot, apparently tracing the ugly pattern of the Axminister carpet.

"I'm twenty," she said at last, in a very low voice. "At twenty I think I ought to be allowed to have wishes of my own."

"Wishes! And who prevents you?"

"I like Mr. Heckner," said Pauline sullenly.

Miss Vyvyan's brown eyes flashed with jealousy and anger. "Very well! Go to him. As you prefer him to me."

"But she doesn't, dear Miss Vyvyan," interposed Mr. Iselle suavely. "She likes him, it seems, but not as she likes you."

"It's quite a different way, daddy," murmured Pauline. "It's only that I feel he would let me have thoughts of my own."

"Thoughts!" snapped Miss Vyvyan. "What thoughts?"

"Musical thoughts. How can I help wanting to have them? I only want to be allowed sometimes to be what I really am," murmured Pauline.

Something had struck Miss Vyvyan to silence. She stood staring at the blonde girl, as if seeing her for the first time and finding her deeply interesting. Mr. Iselle looked from one to the other with half-surreptitious humor.

"Forgive me! One moment!" he said, and he turned sideways, showing a prominent hip, and disappeared into the next room, nearly shutting the folding doors behind him.

"You refuse to come with me to Mrs. Simon, Pauline?"

"I'd rather not, please, if you don't mind. I can't bear to beg for charity."

"Then what d'you mean to do?"

"I don't know."

"Become a typist, a governess? But you don't know enough to teach."

"I want to sing," said the girl, pathetically.

"But if you can't pay to be trained properly—"

There was a silence in the little badly furnished room. It was broken by a dreadful prolonged sound coming apparently from near, but not close, by, the amorous plaint of a cat.

"Oh! What's that?" cried Miss Vyvyan starting.

Another cat's voice broke in upon the first cat's voice, male, insistent, running up and down the scale with hideous intensity. Then a terrier dog barked furiously, and again the cat's duet offended cosmos.

"Where are they? In the back garden?"

The dog's barking became frenzied.

"He must be on a chain or he'd have been at them by now," exclaimed Miss Vyvyan. "There they go again! But I thought they only did it at night. What are you smiling about?"

Suddenly she turned her head; her face changed. "I do believe— Surely it can't be your father!"

She went to the folding doors and looked into the farther room. She saw a fair woman, but not quite so fair as Pauline, lying on a small sofa shaking with laughter, and in a corner, covered with the table-cloth which had been stripped from the breakfast table, a formless hump from which came the complexity of animal voices.

"Well—really!"

For a moment she looked stern, offended. Then her face relaxed, her wrinkles worked busily and finally she sat down abruptly on a dining-room chair and laughed. The hump sud-

denly shot up to a height of six feet, and Mr. Iselle emerged from covert with his lemon-colored hair disordered and his face somewhat congested but perfectly grave and courteous.

"Really, Mr. Iselle! What a way of—you are funny people! I don't believe I shall ever understand you. But now—oh, those cats! Really!" And she began to laugh again, helplessly, against her will. "No, but now really!" She wiped her eyes. "What's to be done about Pauline? I'm sure I could still bring it off with Miriam—Mrs. Simon—but Pauline forbids me."

"Oh, Miss Vyvyan, I should never dare to—"

"Well, it comes to that."

She looked at the girl with a new, reluctant respect.

"I do wish my money would go a little further," said Mrs. Iselle, ruffling her already much ruffled short hair.

"But it won't," said Miss Vyvyan. "And I've got no money."

Pauline reddened. "Oh, I could never let you—"

"If I had I'd spend my last penny to get you into opera."

"You are a dear!" exclaimed the girl, with a sudden melting, like snows of spring letting loose the violets and snowdrops. And she threw her arms round Miss Vyvyan's withered neck and ardently kissed her rough cheek.

"There, darling! I'm not such a Gorgon! I only wish to make you famous. You're a lark, dear, a genuine lark, and I want all the world to look up and hear you and say, 'Isn't that divine?' "

V

MISS VYVYAN returned to the house in Smith Square, but without Pauline, and tackled Mrs. Simon about her refusal. She found her friend evasive, irritatingly non-committal. Mrs. Simon denied any adverse influence from Ilidor. He had said nothing for or against. Then why did Miriam refuse? Didn't she admire Pauline's voice? Mrs. Simon admitted that she did admire it, but, after exacting a pledge of secrecy, she told Miss Vyvyan that she distrusted Pauline's character. There

was something too soft, too yielding in the girl. For an operatic career great force of will was necessary. Mrs. Simon's instinct told her that this force was not in Pauline. The voice was charming certainly, but more was needed for success in opera than mere voice. The temperament must be right.

Miss Vyvyan tried her best to overcome her friend's opposition, but in vain. Mrs. Simon was firm. Under her soft languor there lay concealed a streak of iron. She wouldn't pay for Pauline.

Now what was to be done?

Miss Vyvyan was almost in despair when she received an invitation from Lord and Lady Braybridge to spend Saturday to Monday with them at Coleden Ashby, their place near Marling. They were to have a musical week end. Amber Braybridge had a very musical daughter, Muriel, and thought she was musical herself. So occasionally she suffered musicians, and made Braybridge, who had an active dislike of music, suffer them too. Their house was usually full of rich and important people. Perhaps it might be possible to launch a *ballon d'essai* on behalf of Pauline there.

When Miss Vyvyan arrived from town about five, the butler showed her into a card-room, but before she was beyond the doorway a voice cried out sharply, "Go away! Go away! Can't you see I'm playing bridge?" As Miss Vyvyan retired with the butler she heard the same voice say, in quite a different tone, "No trumps!" Amber Braybridge had welcomed her latest guest.

Was this a musical week end?

"I think Lady Muriel is in the drawing-room, madam," said the butler, who looked rather disconcerted.

"Let's go there then. Am I the last to arrive?"

"Oh no, madam. Mr. Leon Meyer and Dr. Artz are expected by the six o'clock train, and there's a big pianist hasn't come yet. Mr. Bernowsky, or some such a name, I think it is. But most of the ladies and gentlemen this week end have come down by motor."

"Mr. Leon Meyer is coming?" Miss Vyvyan's depression

had vanished. By nature she was an optimist. Her excellent health was all against pessimism. If there was even a chink in the clouds she saw the sun shining through. Leon Meyer! Why not Leon Meyer? Certainly he didn't look very promising, but he was enormously rich and he was notoriously musical. Apart from the making of money his chief hobbies were the collecting of French furniture and promoting the cause of music. What if she could interest him in Pauline's career?

Hope sprang up again in her. She walked into the big drawing-room looking radiant.

Muriel Villers, the musical daughter, who was there with two girls and a couple of men, greeted her affectionately. She had known Miss Vyvyan all her life, spoke of her as "dear old Naomi," realized her good qualities, was entertained by her few eccentricities, and admired her musical talent.

Miss Vyvyan recognized in one of the men the young Egyptian whom she had twice seen in Mrs. Simon's drawing-room, Khalil Ibrahim. Evidently he knew many English people. The second man was Mr. Luke Dawes from the foreign office, tall, large, youngish, with melancholy eyes, thick gray-brown hair and the intensely English manner of an intellectual well-born and well-nourished prig, critically discriminating and thoroughly pleased with himself. Of the two girls one was smart and vague, the other also smart but eager and full of "go." Miss Vyvyan knew them both: Gwendolyn Archer, daughter of a director of the Bank of England, and Susan Drake, Lady Feo Drake's energetic girl, whose animal spirits and dramatic talent had made her popular in London and had startled the suburbs.

Very soon Miss Vyvyan sat down at the grand piano and began to play Schumann, of whose music she had the tradition. She was an accomplished pianist, finished, delicate, romantic rather than passionate, full of refined feeling.

"Oh, that can only be Naomi!" said Lady Braybridge at the drawing-room door, coming in with Mr. Meyer and Dr. Artz just after half past six. "She won't know we've come in!" she added to Leon Meyer.

But she did know it, looked at Mr. Meyer and stopped. The thought of Pauline stopped her. "Put me by Mr. Meyer at dinner, there's a dear!" she found means to whisper to Lady Braybridge before she went up to dress.

"Why? What do you want to get out of him?"

"Nothing for myself."

"You needn't tell me that. You incurable altruist!"

"But will you?"

"I don't know. I had thought of putting you next to Dr. Artz."

"Who is he?"

"Naomi! Dr. Artz!"

"Well, I know nothing about him."

"But he's becoming almost as famous as Voronoff. I suppose you've heard of Voronoff?"

"Yes, of course. The monkey-gland man."

"Well, Dr. Artz claims to have discovered a means of restoring youthful vigor to the old; especially"—she looked very feminine—"a certain kind of vigor."

"What kind?" asked Miss Vyvyan innocently. "Intellectual vigor?"

"I'm not sure that it's exactly that. But you can ask him either at dinner, or, if I give in and put you by Leon Meyer, after dinner." She went away smiling. What a darling Naomi was!

There were three round tables for dinner. Miss Vyvyan found herself at Lord Braybridge's table between Mr. Meyer and the young Egyptian, who had Susan Drake on his other side. She was so intent upon what she wanted from Mr. Meyer that she scarcely realized who was her left-hand neighbor till Khalil began speaking to her about Egyptian politics.

Miss Vyvyan knew nothing about them.

When she turned to Mr. Meyer she resolved to be wily and began talking about French furniture, asking him for information about his famous collection, which he gave with unusual animation. She realized that he was a man who, in spite of his tired appearance and often indifferent manner, must have an

eager, perhaps even a passionate, temperament. His remarkable eyes were surely the truest part of him. There was no youth in them, not the least gleam from the wonder time of a man's life, but there was energy in them, and something in that energy called to hers. And suddenly she was conscious in an unusual way of the tragedy that exists in the dissimilarity between body and soul. And with that consciousness linked itself a remembrance, the remembrance of Amber Braybridge's explanation about Dr. Artz.

She looked quickly about the long room, and saw Dr. Artz sitting at Amber's left hand in earnest conversation with her. She looked at him steadily for a moment forgetting Mr. Meyer, who was still telling her about French furniture.

Dr. Artz was short. He was not exactly stout, but his figure was so peculiar that he looked stout. His body seemed to push itself forward in front as if determined to be noticed and his chest was large and protuberant. He had long arms and large hands that looked capable and determined. His legs were short, but of course Miss Vyvyan couldn't see them as they were under the table.

He was very ugly, she thought, but his ugliness didn't prevent his face from being impressive. It reminded her a good deal of the famous photograph of Beethoven, but Dr. Artz was much uglier than Beethoven. His features were rough and irregular. His nose looked as if it had been flattened by an accident, and his mouth was curiously simian. His forehead on the other hand was magnificent, and he had a fine brainy-looking head with plenty of strong dark hair growing unusually far back upon it. His eyes, too, were remarkable. They were not large, indeed they were unusually small, but they were exceptionally luminous. It is very rare that one sees black eyes. But Artz's eyes from a distance looked as if they were black. His eyebrows, dark, projected. The eyes were rather sunken. Miss Vyvyan supposed him to be about forty—perhaps forty-five? She didn't know, and couldn't guess, what his nationality was, and she was about to ask Mr. Meyer, when she heard him say:

"I got it, but I had to give twenty thousand pounds for it."

"Twenty thousand pounds! What for?"

He looked surprised. "But I just told you! For the table that belonged to Marie Antoinette."

"Twenty thousand pounds for a table!"

"But it's unique. You couldn't match it if you searched all over Europe."

Twenty thousand pounds for a table! And Pauline's entire education for grand opera wouldn't cost more than at most—Miss Vyvyan, who wasn't an arithmetician, made a rapid confused calculation—about three thousand pounds, or two perhaps; yes, more likely two. No, perhaps three, if everything possible were done to perfect her powers. And this little thin, pale, played-out man was actually able to pay twenty thousand pounds for a table! He must pay for Pauline. It was sinful to neglect humanity, aspiring youthful humanity for the worship of tables.

But Miss Vyvyan resolved to give Mr. Meyer a chance to atone.

"I must say I should like to see a table that's worth twenty thousand pounds."

"Come to my house one day when you are in London and I will show it to you with great pleasure."

"I'm nearly always in London. Thank you very much. I will certainly come." She paused, examined him with eager eyes. What would be the best way? "If—when I come, may I bring someone with me?"

"Certainly; any friend of yours will be welcome."

"Do you remember that girl who sang—who *tried* to sing to you at Mrs. Simon's?"

How startling Mr. Meyer's eyes were sometimes! There was something actually formidable in their expression. They were too alive for the face in which they were set. They needed a different setting.

"A fair girl. I remember her. She tried to sing some Mozart."

This remark encouraged Miss Vyvyan, and she told Mr. Meyer how distressed she was that Mrs. Simon wouldn't take

an interest in Pauline, owing, she was sure, to the adverse influence of Heckner.

"Miriam had practically promised to pay for Pauline's—Miss Iselle's—education as an opera singer, and now she has refused to have anything to do with Pauline. The poor child's heart-broken. Isn't it cruel?"

She gazed eagerly at Mr. Meyer, searching for symptoms of charitable intent. His thin right hand, delicate, old-looking, tapped gently on the table near his glass of whisky and water. How unemotional he was! How unsympathetic people were! But now, how to influence him? She wasn't conscious of being deliberately artful, deliberately anything, when she added:

"The poor child's in despair. How she would worship anyone who would help her!" Her eyes were literally imploring Mr. Meyer. "Don't you believe in her? Has Heckner set you against her?"

"Ilidor Heckner admired the young lady."

"No!" Miss Vyvyan was startled. "But I'm sure he told Miriam not to help her."

"I cannot say what he told Mrs. Simon. He told me that it was a beautiful voice."

Miss Vyvyan was abruptly in ecstasy. "And he didn't even hear her in Puccini. So it's all the more—but then why did Miriam refuse?"

"No doubt," said Mr. Meyer, "she had a good reason."

She was vaguely conscious of craft and of worldly knowledge which she didn't, would never, possess.

"But then—must Pauline give it all up?" she said. "For want of a few paltry pounds? That lovely voice wasted! And after all I've done! If only someone would help!" Her methods were blatant, but she didn't know that, and honestly thought she was being quite subtle. "I wonder," she added, like one doing some very hard thinking, "where I could find a good Samaritan."

She glanced sideways at Mr. Meyer, and had the feeling that he was turning over in his mind the question of Pauline's

future. His face showed nothing. Nevertheless she was sure of this. She had planted the seed. Would it flower? But she was in such a hurry.

"Oh, Mr. Meyer," she imprudently said, kicking caution to the winds, "won't *you* help Pauline?"

Directly she had said that, having fixed her eyes ardently on him, she saw him look across the room to Lady Braybridge's table as if in search of something. His eyes came to rest, she noticed, on Dr. Artz. And though she couldn't understand why it should be so she had the conviction that he had been moved by her question to look at the doctor. But what had Dr. Artz to do with Pauline and her future? She could not conceive of a link between them. Yet she retained the conviction that when she had asked her question of Mr. Meyer he had asked a question of Dr. Artz, with his eyes, and had asked it because of her question.

But Dr. Artz was evidently quite unaware of Mr. Meyer's attention. He was still talking, or listening, to Lady Braybridge, who, using a favorite gesture of hers, was waving a hand emphatically very near to his face.

"Is he remarkable?" Miss Vyvyan found herself saying.

Why had she left the subject of Pauline? Mr. Meyer hadn't even answered her question. He withdrew his reptilian gaze from Artz. "It seems so. I met him for the first time today. We talked in the train coming down."

Again he looked at the doctor, with apparent intensity.

"He is trying to change, to get the better of nature. But—about your young protégée?"

"Yes—yes? I hope you don't mind my—"

"I like your eagerness," he said, with sudden, unexpected kindness.

Miss Vyvyan felt deeply touched and warm all over. Without being aware of it she was an ardent searcher after sympathy. And she didn't get too much of it. But she was conscious of what she thought of as strange hesitation in him. He had surely not yet mentally rejected her proposition. But he

was full of some deep hesitation! And it wasn't because of the money. No, it wasn't the money question!

Once more she was drawn to look at Dr. Artz. She did not know why. This time he happened to be looking at her. His eyes seemed to be probing her, to be saying: "How would it be with her?" She felt slightly uncomfortable. Very rarely, scarcely ever, did she feel self-conscious. But now for a moment she suffered under the doctor's steady, and perhaps purely scientific gaze. There was something in those eyes which made her uneasy.

She looked away from him and once more at Mr. Meyer.

"Do you think—is there any chance of your helping Pauline?"

Just then Lady Braybridge, who was in a hurry for bridge in spite of having arranged for a musical week end, got up abruptly from her table and said in her rather cutting voice, a voice with a sharp edge to it,

"Don't be political when we women are out, Braybridge, or we shall never get down to bridge. Besides, there's going to be music"—she paused, then added—"for those who prefer it. Come along!"

The last injunction was addressed to all the women.

As Miss Vyvyan was moving away from him, unsatisfied, Mr. Meyer let his reptile's eyes rest upon her for an instant. "Possibly I may be able to do something for Miss Iselle," he murmured in her ear, keeping his voice very low. "When you come to see the Marie Antoinette table I may be able to tell you. I make no promise."

"May I bring her with me when I come?"

He hesitated obviously, and again looked towards Dr. Artz. Then he said: "I'll let you know, if you'll allow me. You must give me an address to write to."

"Come along, Naomi. You're holding us all up!" cried out Lady Braybridge imperiously. "What are you whispering about to Mr. Leon?"

As Miss Vyvyan hurried away, she said to herself once more, "What *can* Dr. Artz have to do with Pauline's future?"

VI

USUALLY whenever there was good music about her Miss Vyvyan gave herself to it wholly, lost herself in it. But on that first evening at Coleden Ashby the thought of music irritated her. What she wanted to do was to sit in a corner and talk to Dr. Artz.

She was sure he was unmusical. Those scientific men were not generally musical. Music was too vague, too fluid, too escaping for them. Music was a butterfly you wouldn't put a pin through.

"Now, Naomi, we won't wait for the men. Give us some Schumann," said Lady Braybridge.

She was uneasy for bridge, but she came over to the piano and listened for two or three minutes. "Marvelous!" she said. "She's got genius—the way she plays. Dear old Naomi!"

Miss Vyvyan was oblivious to what was going on around her. She did not see Amber collecting seven people, did not notice. But when at last she stopped and gave way to the Russian pianist Bernowsky she saw Dr. Artz in a corner of the big drawing-room, and she knew at once, by his expression, a shining intentness in his eyes, that he had been listening to her playing with interest, perhaps even with emotion. Evidently she had been wrong and the doctor was fond of music.

That evening she had no conversation with him, but on the following day, Sunday, when the Braybridges and some of their visitors were at church in the little village outside the gates of the park, and Miss Vyvyan, who was an essentially good woman not fond of religious observances, was finishing a letter to Pauline in Amber's sitting-room, she saw Dr. Artz go slowly by in the garden. As he went he glanced into the room where she was. He did not take any notice of her. She was not even certain that he had seen her. And yet probably he had. Hadn't there been an invitation in his look? She had a half-conviction that he would like to have a talk with her.

She finished her letter to Pauline abruptly, and, after two or

three minutes of hesitation, went out into the garden. Artz was sitting wrapped in a cloak on a garden chair by a large cedar tree, and was looking into the park, where some of the deer were visible moving delicately among the big oaks for which Coleden was famous. She obeyed her curiosity and joined him.

They had a long conversation by the cedar tree.

Artz, she learned, was half German-Swiss and half Italian. His mother had been an Italian of Milan. He told her that he lived in Zurich, the most musical city of Switzerland, and that he was specially fond of string music, and played himself, the second violin in an amateur quartet which met once a week.

They talked music for a while, but Miss Vyvyan hadn't followed Artz for musical talk. It was not the known she desired to pursue in this stranger but the unknown.

Her curiosity therefore was not musical, and soon they were talking of life, of men and women, of psychology, of the prospect for man, of ill health and its action on the mind, of the blank wall where knowledge ends.

Artz was a qualified doctor and surgeon, he told her. But it was evident that he held a very poor opinion of the average physician. Surgery he put in another category. "Surgeons save many people from death every day," he said. He spoke with a measure of appreciation of the Swiss herbalists, who claim to cure disease with combinations of herbs. Many of them were subtle fellows and full of strange knowledge. "Instinct, too! They go a good deal by that. Instinct, the mysterious guide that leads men sometimes towards the Key."

"What do you mean by the Key? The beyond?" she asked.

"No, knowledge of a hidden truth," he said.

And then he rather shocked her by abruptly telling her that he didn't believe in a beyond which could ever be attained by the people of this planet. There was a strange touch of savagery in his voice as he said that.

Miss Vyvyan who, though not religious in any strict sense, had a passionate desire to persist, an instinct for continuing

which she thought of as proof that she, and those around her, were destined to endure far beyond this earth life, and who was indeed inclined to believe in reincarnation, felt suddenly chilled, almost frightened by what he had said, and still more by his way of saying it.

"You are an atheist?"

"I think we are in being, in any kind of being, for a very short time."

"How awful!" she said.

"Perhaps that time may be prolonged, will eventually be very much prolonged."

She remembered what Amber and Mr. Meyer had said about Artz. Was he fighting what men called Nature, striving against what she thought of as the appointed destiny of man? She saw him for a moment as horribly presumptuous. Yet surely all that man can do to conquer is worthy effort. With nothing left to conquer what would man become? And then she saw Artz as fine, courageous, perhaps even noble.

"The doctors know very little," he said, "drug action is practically a dead letter to them. I wish to prolong earthly life. As to the means, I don't care what they are so long as they effect that prolongation which, in my opinion, is all we have to look for."

He had struck her to an unusual silence, reduced her to the rôle of listener. But now she saw him as one whose lack of belief had fired him with an intense purpose.

Rejecting the possibility of after life his mind was set upon lengthening earthly life. Mr. Meyer had told her that Artz was trying to change, to "get the better of" nature. As she sat for a moment dumb, knowledge seemed to come to her, to penetrate her. Mr. Meyer was old. She didn't know what his age was, but he was certainly old. She, too, was—though she didn't feel it—getting old. The forties were left behind, and though she had splendid health, was wiry and tremendously energetic, she was covered with wrinkles, had lost all physical charm. She scarcely ever bothered about that. But now, being

with Artz and his view of life, she felt that she knew why Mr. Meyer had asked him silent questions at dinner, and also why Artz had looked intensely at her on the previous evening. The elderly and the old must be deeply interesting to him. She presented to him a problem. They perhaps offered him a chance.

For a moment she felt as if she were mere material. When their conversation, which she found enthralling, though sometimes horrible, was over, her fundamental simplicity was vaguely conscious of assault.

Artz had been very outspoken. She wasn't a young woman. He had spoken to her as he might have spoken to a man. He had startled her. Something in her, an intellectual something, perhaps, refused to be shocked—but he had startled her. The stress laid by him on the physical part of life had at first disgusted her. This purely materialistic conception—wasn't it—lowered the values. But then she had found herself saying. "Isn't it so? Isn't he perhaps telling me ugly truths?"

He had said: "It's useless to prolong old powerless life. There is nothing worth keeping in that. Old age just hanging on is a tragedy, disgusting too. Shaking limbs, rheumy eyes, the inability to love—what is the good of that? But if the powers of youth, the worth-while powers, can be revived in the so-called old, then age, as we think of it, is abolished. To live without your powers is disgusting, no good to anyone. But to live with your powers—that is grand!"

He had explained to her plainly what he meant by the inability to love.

She felt angry with him at one moment, for he had touched her on the raw. He had, not intentionally—she was quite sure of that—made of her talents, her vitality, just nothing. But if he knew the truth, that she had always lived in her gift, in her ardor for others, in her reaching-out intellect, in her imagination, but never in the love of the body, which apparently meant very much, almost everything, to him, what would he think of her? She saw herself as a virgin at the keyhole of life, listening, looking, but never entering the room where the

human drama was taking place. But immediately afterwards, in that moment of anger, linked with a curious sense of degradation, she saw him as wholly sensual.

She was not sensual, had never been sensual. And she had never strongly attracted sensual people. The electricity of the senses hadn't flashed between her and the bodies around her. It seemed to her now that she must always have been a freak, living in music, in reading, in the study of languages, in doing things for other people. Why, she was living now in another's life, the life of Pauline, at least in so much as Pauline permitted!

Suddenly she stood at gaze and looked at Pauline as she had not looked before. She saw the fair, untalkative girl, with the silvery eyes and the soft white throat, standing with men around her. Heckner, Meyer, and Artz. And they were not looking at her as a songstress, the lark to which Miss Vyvyan had sometimes compared her, but as a human being who possessed the ability to win love. And then the circle was joined by a young man with a dark skin and eyes of the East, Khalil Ibrahim.

Her anger soon died. But Artz had troubled her. He lifted her from small things, but again he troubled her obscurely. She wondered how he lived. She wondered whether he was married, had children. She longed to ask him. He was surely a humanitarian. That he might be an ardent moneymaker did not occur to Miss Vyvyan.

After dinner in the drawing-room Amber said to her:

"Well, how did you like him?"

"Dr. Artz?"

"Of course."

"I find him tremendously interesting."

"So do I. And so does our friend Leon."

"Mr. Meyer!"

"Yes. I knew he would. That's why I asked them together." She lowered her voice and smiled. "Leon would be a wonderful patient for Artz, wouldn't he? He is so worn out and so rich.

All his life he has only *really* cared for one thing, and now it's out of his reach."

"What has he really cared for?"

"Oh well, if you don't know! But—you wouldn't know, you old darling!" Amber was still smiling.

"I suppose you mean—do you mean that Mr. Meyer can't enjoy life much physically now because he's old and tired?"

"Perhaps I do. You dear old thing!"

Amber, always a restless creature, was about to hurry away when Miss Vyvyan stopped her. "Do tell me something!"

"Well, what is it?"

"Is Dr. Artz married?"

"I don't think he is at the moment."

"What do you mean?"

"He has been married three times."

"Three times! But—are they dead?"

"The first one died, I have been told, in childbirth. The other two are very much alive. They were all very beautiful girls, I believe."

"Did he divorce them? But of course he must have."

"Or they might have divorced him."

"Did they?"

"I believe he got rid of them. I don't exactly know how. One, I fancy, was a French divorce, arranged in Paris. You know nowadays one goes to France mainly for two reasons, to get gowns and divorces. Do play something."

Miss Vyvyan went to the piano. She and Bernowsky made music during the evening. But for once she was not "in the vein." She felt now that her life in music had not been worth while. Something in Artz had clipped her wings. No flying for her that night! She felt herself to be a worn-out old wretch. She was actually self-conscious, troubled about her appearance, her wrinkles, her leathery skin, withered sapless body and cropped gray hair.

When she said good-night to Artz he remarked, "You didn't play tonight as you did last night."

"I know I didn't. That was your fault."

He asked for no explanation. Instead he inquired what train she was leaving for London by the next morning. She told him.

On the following morning she found that he was leaving by the same train. Why he should wish to travel with her she didn't know. A man who was so fond of pretty women that he had already married three of them couldn't possibly be seriously taken with her.

Was it possible that he had some scientific design in connection with her? She began to feel actually nervous with Artz. Yet he stimulated her tremendously and interested her.

On the journey up somewhat to her surprise he spoke about people; about Mr. Meyer and Khalil Ibrahim. He even compared them.

"Khalil Ibrahim," he said, "represents fulness of life, life at its zenith, hot, vivid, lazy perhaps, but demonstrative in the most complete degree of the eternal life principle. Life in its youthful heat is represented to perfection by the men of Egypt before they grow old. Look at the difference between such a man as this Khalil Ibrahim and such a man as Leon Meyer: wouldn't you say, comparing him with this Khalil Ibrahim, that he was a finished man?"

She hesitated.

"Well?" said Artz, with his strong, rather ugly, accent, German rather than Italian.

"I was going to say yes, when I thought of his eyes," she said, truthfully.

Artz seemed struck by the remark. "That is clever of you," he said. "But you are clever. The eyes show Meyer's mind. To me they seem to be saying, 'My mind is alive, horribly alive. But the rest of me is almost dead, horribly almost dead. Make that alive, too! Do not let *me* be alive all alone.' Would not Meyer be thankful to have the life of the eyes echoed through the whole of his body? Ah? Ah?" The exclamation was flung at her as a query.

"I dare say he would," she said.

"He would. He would!" said Artz, emphatically. "He gives twenty thousand pounds for a table. He would give much more for a bodily renewal. Khalil Ibrahim and this Mr. Meyer—I see them as life and death." He shut his eyes for a moment. "Yes, I see them before me."

Then in a quieter and more level voice he began to speak of the Egyptians. He didn't take the average Englishman's view of them. Evidently he respected the intellectual powers of the well educated and superior Egyptians quite as much as he respected similar powers in the English.

"But their moral character!" she said hastily, driven to defend her countrymen.

"Morality, immorality, whatever you like to call it, is very much the same all the world over. Go down beneath the surface, far enough down, and you will find not dissimilarities but similarities. Nations glory in what they choose to consider their superiorities. It is the height of foolishness."

He asked her if she knew Khalil Ibrahim well. She said no.

"He lives where I do," he said. "He has come over to Europe to study in Zurich. Many Egyptian youths come there."

When they got to London she expected him to make some suggestion about seeing her again. She felt certain that he would not simply say good-by to her without any words about the future. But, after getting her luggage politely and seeing her into a taxicab, he merely took off his hat, said good-by and turned to find a cab for himself.

It was not what she had expected. She felt as if she had made a fool of herself. He had roused in her a quite unwonted feeling of self-consciousness.

"Am I a simpleton?"

He had made her say that to herself. A very unwonted suspiciousness crept in her. "What are they all up to?" That was not a characteristic question for her to ask herself. But, thinking of Artz, of Leon Meyer, Khalil Ibrahim, Heckner, and even of Miriam Simon, that very old friend, she put it to herself now.

But she didn't include Pauline in the list. Dear Pauline! She was such a child. One couldn't be suspicious of her.

VII

A WEEK after Miss Vyvyan's return to London she received a note which roused in her enthusiastic excitement. It was from Mr. Meyer, and invited her to come to his house in Carlton House Terrace on the following Friday afternoon to see the marvelous table. That pleased her. But the excitement was lit in her by the postscript.

"If you think the young lady who sang to us at Mrs. Simon's house would be interested in French furniture, which I venture to doubt, please bring her with you."

Miss Vyvyan sent an immediate answer by messenger boy accepting, and telling Mr. Meyer that of course Pauline Iselle would simply love to see the wonderful table. Then she hurried off to Pauline to tell her what was afoot.

"Of course we'll look at the table, and mind you admire it. It must be simply marvelous if it's worth such an enormous sum. But afterwards you're going to sing *'Mi chiamano Mimi'* to my accompaniment. Now it's no use looking stubborn. I've been working like a beaver for you all this time, and if you refuse me such a simple thing after all my trouble—I'm speaking seriously, Pauline—I'll wash my hands of the whole business. You can become a typist, a manikin, or anything you like. *I* shall have done with you."

"But if Mr. Heckner's there—"

"Heckner won't be there. But even if he is you will sing *'Mi chiamano Mimi'* and this time I shall be at the piano. Put on your pale gray dress and hat. I want you to look your best."

Pauline sent an almost strangely inquiring glance to Miss Vyvyan.

"Why do you look at me like that?" said Miss Vivyan.

"I was only thinking."

"What about? I never know what you're thinking about. Are you going to help me this time, or not?"

"If I sing I will try."

"Sing! Of course you'll sing. That's why we're going. The

table is only an excuse, and Mr. Meyer knows that as well as I do. Put on your gray dress and hat, and be natural."

"I always am," said Pauline. "I don't know how to be anything else—yet."

That was true, and Miss Vyvyan recognized the truth of it. Pauline was sometimes almost terribly natural. Would Mr. Meyer like that? Did men like utterly natural women better than the woman full of adroit artifice? Being hopelessly natural herself Miss Vyvyan didn't know.

On the day appointed Pauline came to fetch Miss Vyvyan at Miss Vyvyan's club, the United Women's Club in Albemarle Street, wearing a dark blue dress and a small black hat.

"Where's your gray dress? I told you to put on your gray dress and hat. You do everything you can to get in your own way. What has come over you?"

"I want to succeed only with my voice. I don't want Mr. Meyer or anyone else to help me just because I wear a particular dress."

"What a child you are, Pauline! But it's too late to change now. We must start at once or we shall be late. That blue dress isn't— Now mind you admire the table! I've got the 'Bohème.' And do remember to sing very softly and simply. Don't make your *mezza voce* . . ." She continued to advise and exhort till they got to Carlton House Terrace.

Mr. Meyer was a bachelor. His name had been closely connected with many women, and no less than three well-known girls in London were supposed to be daughters of his, though other men were their legal fathers. His notorious fondness for women was apparently equaled by his antipathy for the unholy estate of matrimony. But he did not live alone in his vast house looking over the Mall. He had an old spinster sister with him, Anna Meyer—"Miss Anna" as she was usually called by all those who were intimate with the Meyers.

It was Miss Anna who welcomed Miss Vyvyan and Pauline when they arrived to see the wonderful table. Her brother had been detained in the City but would be in almost directly.

Miss Anna was a personality. She had a big fortune of her

own and, when she was young, had had many suitors all of whom she had sent about their business. Whether she had ever wished to marry nobody knew. Certainly she had never shown such a wish to the curious world. Any tenderness for men seemed foreign to her nature, though she had had many intellectual friendships with men. She had a clever brain, sharp sight, considerable worldly knowledge and financial ability that was respected by her brother. She was often kind, but she seldom or never gave the impression of softness. Her intellect was eager, her judgment in matters of art was keen and sure. She seldom made a mistake about a composer, a painter, a writer, sculptor, or singer.

In appearance she was of middle height, with a white complexion which she powdered to make it whiter, snow-white hair beautifully arranged, the type of Jewish nose that has no hook in it but that spreads out at the tip, and fine highly intelligent and vivacious dark eyes, that could read and were always reading, though not always in books. She was a great Jewish lady.

When Miss Vyvyan and Pauline walked into the enormous drawing-room with green and gold paneled walls and Louis Quinze furniture Miss Anna was sitting in company with a poodle as white as herself. She greeted them with a temperate kindness. Her hands were cordial, her eyes were keenly observant. With a swift glance she examined Pauline. The girl felt for an instant like one under fire. Miss Anna's glance was like a strong touch going all over her—then lifted from her.

They sat down. Miss Anna gave them tea, and listened while Miss Vyvyan tried to enlist her sympathies for Pauline. Pauline longed to stop Miss Vyvyan's kind talk. Being explained so much made her feel very contemptible. And yet she had within her an odd consciousness of power which she couldn't understand yet and didn't feel at home with.

"So you want to be a singer!" said Miss Anna at last, breaking in with a guttural accent on Miss Vyvyan's information.

"Yes, I should like to sing," said Pauline.

"Are you ready to work very hard?"

"Of course Pauline—" from Miss Vyvyan.

"Really hard?" interposed Miss Anna. "Have you the genuine stuff in you?"

"The genuine stuff?" said Pauline.

"Cold iron under all the emotion that a great singer must be able to feel?" said Miss Anna.

"I don't know."

Miss Vyvyan's eyes were rebuking, but Miss Anna looked pleased. "She's genuine," she said to Miss Vyvyan.

Just then Mr. Meyer walked into the room accompanied by Dr. Artz.

Miss Vyvyan was startled. She had not expected this troubling personality. She had wanted to see Artz again, but not now, and certainly not with Pauline. Artz was not a man who could help with Pauline. Why had he come? Why had Mr. Meyer brought him? She remembered Mr. Meyer's silent question asked across Amber Braybridge's dinner table, and her shaken simplicity no longer guarded her from unaccustomed suspicion. Artz was surely endowed with a subterranean nature. Again that ugly "What are they up to?" recurred to her mind.

As she introduced him to Pauline hastily, not waiting for any move on the part of Miss Anna, she had an odd feeling of doing something wrong. She was responsible, wasn't she? She had brought about this visit to Carlton House Terrace. If anything unpleasant resulted from it she would have to blame herself. She saw Artz's inquisitive eyes fixed on Pauline, and suddenly the necessary publicity of an opera singer's life struck home to her—so she felt it—for the very first time. She was fighting with all her strength to gain for Pauline this very publicity, and yet she was being disturbed by the gaze at Pauline of the eyes of one man.

Undoubtedly she was ridiculous. If Pauline were ever to do any good, thousands must gaze at her, perhaps hundreds of thousands.

Mr. Meyer seemed to take no interest in Pauline beyond that made necessary by politeness. Miss Vyvyan thought, however, that he showed slightly more vitality than usual. There was

surely a faint echo of the eyes in the rest of his body. He spoke of the marvelous table, and almost directly suggested taking Miss Vyvyan to the room where it was, a room downstairs on the ground floor. She assented eagerly. "Come, Pauline."

Pauline got up at once from her chair near Miss Anna. Her manner just then was like that of an obedient child. Mr. Meyer looked at her, then said unexpectedly:

"You don't care for Marie Antoinette tables!"

"I don't know. I've never seen one," said Pauline.

"Let her stay and have a little talk with me," said Miss Anna. "Children can't be expected to go into ecstasies over furniture, like us old people."

Her brother frowned. A faint smile went over Artz's lips. Miss Vyvyan exclaimed, "A child! Pauline's twenty!"

"Only twenty!" said Miss Anna. "Wonderful! Now go—you three!"

When Pauline and she were alone Miss Anna began to question the girl, kindly but with the air of one who had a right to be informed.

"Have you ambition, Miss Iselle?" she inquired.

After a slight pause for consideration Pauline said, "I want to sing. I should like to try to give pleasure to a great many people."

Miss Anna found something oddly impressive in the remark. It might almost have been an expression of altruism. "And naturally you wish for a rich reward?" she said, in a voice that became suddenly shrewd.

Pauline again seemed to hesitate, as if perhaps considering. These little pauses made her manner extraordinarily natural.

"I suppose so," she said. "I haven't thought about that. I want very much to sing. I feel as if I could sing, when I'm thoroughly prepared of course, so as to please people. When I'm singing I feel very natural—if I am allowed to sing as I want to."

"And that doesn't always happen, I'm sure," said Miss Anna.

The girl was certainly going to say something impulsive, but she checked the words that were coming. "Oh—but—but I

don't suppose I know the best way yet," she said. "That's why I want so much to go to a great teacher. I have practiced a lot with Miss Vyvyan."

"But now you want to escape."

Pauline reddened. "I didn't mean that."

"I know what you mean." Miss Anna was pleased with Pauline's transparent genuineness, and had realized at once that her rather peculiar appearance would be a great asset to her in a public career. But what stuff was she made of?

Before the table seers came back Miss Anna had found out a good deal about Pauline. The girl was terribly ignorant. She knew some French, a little Italian, a few words of German. She had also "licked up" some odd scraps of knowledge here and there out of Miss Vyvyan's talk. But the book of "culture," very sacred in Miss Anna's eyes, was a closed book to her.

"I don't believe she knows what nation Goethe belonged to." Miss Anna said to herself at one point in their interview. Nor did she seem much better informed about musicians.

"She's a complete ignoramus—with charm," was Miss Anna's mental comment.

She perceived the North in Pauline, but could not tell whether she had the perversity of the North, the determination of the North, the sometimes glittering sensuality and curious indifference to opinion of the North. And the saucy vitality of young America? From an Americanized mother had she drawn any of that? Apparently not. There was, Miss Anna divined, a touch of the slave in this girl. That touch, even in the estimate of the somewhat imperious old Jewess, made for fascination.

And men would feel it. Miss Anna thought of her brother. He never told her anything and she knew just what he was. "Mr. Leon"—to her, Leo. As she looked with her brilliant old eyes at Pauline she saw the brother with whom she had kept house for so long fading down into the outworn pallor of old age, yet still keeping the manias of youth somehow alive within him. The immortality of manias! Like claws they tightened on a man as he grew older and older, their strength seeming to increase with the rolling on of the years.

What Artz declared to be possible—was it possible? And if so what would be the price to Leo and, surely, to others? For everything must be paid for. And hard cash is sometimes the least onerous fashion of payment. What a pity, what a tragedy even, that Leo couldn't reconcile himself to the natural process of destiny!

"D'you like old people, Miss Iselle?" The girl looked up startled. "Don't you find us very repulsive?" continued Miss Anna.

"But I was thinking how very interesting you are."

"Old bones interesting! But I have no wish to be young, to go backward. Forward! That's my motto. Forward, onward, even into the darkness. It's crazy to wish to go back. But many of us are crazy. I hope you are too sensible ever to put up a fight against destiny."

"I don't know," said Pauline. And it seemed just then to Miss Anna that that was the girl's motto sentence: "I don't know."

"And when she does know—what then?"

And then the drawing-room door opened and Miss Vyvyan and the two men came back.

Miss Vyvyan was loud in praises of the table and she regretted again and again that Pauline hadn't seen it. She persisted in this regret till Mr. Meyer, as if driven to it, offered to go downstairs again with Pauline and to show it to her. He did this as if with a faint reluctance, not at all impolite.

They descended the broad staircase in silence. Mr. Meyer was close behind the girl, who was uneasily conscious of him. She did not dislike him, but she was made uncomfortable by the knowledge that Miss Vyvyan wanted him to pay for her musical education; and his apparent indifference and languid coldness had not entirely deceived her. Something in her knew that she had roused a curious interest within him, though its exact nature was hidden from her.

At the bottom of the staircase he joined her. They crossed the large hall, which was hung with pictures of the modern French school, and came into a big room looking out to the Mall. Green branches showed through the tall windows. One of these windows was open, and Pauline heard the singing of birds.

Mr. Meyer shut the mahogany door gently. "The table is here," he said.

She felt a hand close softly round her right elbow, to guide her. And thus she was conveyed to the end of the room. They stood still, and the hand left her elbow.

"The time of Louis XVI was the greatest era yet known for furniture," said Mr. Meyer. "All that work there"—he pointed—"is carried out in gilded bronze. It's that which makes this table so valuable, in fact unique. I have never seen anything to touch it for subtlety, delicacy, and ornate beauty. How does it strike you?"

Again Pauline felt the gentle hand close round her elbow. She was looking at the marvelous table but she knew that Mr. Meyer's vivid eyes were fixed upon her.

"Do you like it? Do you realize its exquisite beauty?"

"But you have told me how beautiful it is," she said, after a pause to consider what she should say.

"Ah! And if I hadn't?" Her elbow was pressed.

"What does it matter what I think?"

"To you it matters."

"Oh—to me! Yes, it does of course." She sounded surprised. "I think it's most beautiful. But what is the good of my saying that now?"

"You mean, it's too late because you have been told?"

"And Miss Vyvyan said such a lot."

"Little girl, you want to find out things for yourself. Well, you are quite right. Go your own way, in music too. Perhaps you have something in you which won't betray you."

Pauline flushed deeply with pleasure. At that moment she felt a sudden great liking for Mr. Meyer, and all her uneasiness went from her.

"I do want to find my own way," she murmured. "But of course I know I have to be helped. I know how ignorant I am."

"Life will teach you," said Mr. Meyer. And when he said that Pauline felt uneasy again. "Now we will go upstairs," he added.

VIII

WHEN they came into the drawing-room Miss Anna and Miss Vyvyan were both talking to Dr. Artz at once, and Pauline caught the words, "Naturally it's impossible not to be interested in such a subject," from Miss Vyvyan, and, "Even if it is so I think it's a great mistake to try and interfere with the natural course of things," uttered with conviction by Miss Anna.

Miss Anna turned as Pauline and her brother appeared and said to the latter with emphasis,

"Dr. Artz will never convert me to his theories. He may be right. He has a very convincing way with him. But I shall never believe that it's wise to interfere with the processes of nature. Old people should be let alone, not so much for their own sakes, perhaps, as for the sake of the young. The young have an instinctive wish to get rid of us. We may think that cruel. We usually do. But it's perfectly natural. We've had a run for our money, a long run too. They want to see a clear course before them for their run. They don't want a litter of old creatures all over the place obstructing them. No, Dr. Artz" —she turned again towards him—"what I suppose you would call arresting decay *I* call arresting progress. But of course we've got different beliefs. Or rather you've got no belief at all in anything beyond your glands and your herbs and your medicine bottles."

"Do you know," said Dr. Artz, "that you are unique? Your sister is unique, Monsieur Meyer. She is the only living creature I have ever come across who isn't at heart an individualist. She acually *wants* to make way. She is able to regard herself as an impediment. But it's incredible!" he added, with a sudden change of tone, and his curiously ugly face became stern with scrutiny. "I don't believe you, Miss Meyer. You only imagine you are so unnaturally unselfish. You have never been put to the test."

"What test?" said Miss Anna, without a trace of severity.

"The test of renewal."

"Good heavens! You aren't going to perform an operation on me in the drawing-room, are you, when I have guests?"

"Why not?" He met her old smile with a smile more subtle. "But no—not an operation. Let us say a trifling experiment."

"What is it?" asked Mr. Meyer, suddenly manifesting deep interest.

"Have you got in the house some eggs?"

"Eggs?" said Miss Anna. "Of course we have."

"Some glycerin?"

"I expect so."

"Some brandy?"

"Leo's old brandy is famous among epicures who dine with us."

"Some Bovril?"

"Yes. I take it the last thing at night to get rid of insomnia."

"Very well. Send for these things, and I will supply the iodin."

"Iodin? What's iodin for? What are you going to do?"

"Let your butler bring these things and a glass, and I will show you." As he spoke he put his hand in a pocket and brought out a medicine bottle. "The iodin!" he said. "And"—he dived again—"here's a drop distiller. Now, may I ring the bell?"

"I will," said Mr. Meyer. And walking with unusual alacrity he went to a bell and touched it. The butler answered. "Give your order," said Meyer to Artz. Dr. Artz did so.

The butler looked doubtful as well as astonished.

"Go to Mrs. Hamson, Bowchier," said Miss Anna. "She always has everything. I'm sure she isn't out of glycerin."

"Certainly, ma'am."

"Mrs. Hamson's been our London housekeeper for over twenty years," Miss Anna explained. "She's a marvel. She'd save any situation."

"That is all, thank you," said Dr. Artz. "Can you remember?"

"I think so, sir. Two raw eggs on a plate, some glycerin,

with it a teaspoon, some of the best old brandy, with it a dessert spoon, some heated Bovril and a claret glass, sir."

Bowchier turned to go, but when he was close to the door Meyer said in his faded voice, "Bowchier! Bring several eggs and several glasses."

"Certainly, sir." Bowchier went out and shut the door.

"What's that for, Leo?" said Miss Anna sharply.

"There may be others who want to take part in this experiment. Why should you be the only one?" There was a note of active jealousy in his voice as he said the words, and his dreadfully smooth face looked almost petulant for a moment. "Miss Vyvyan may wish to join you," he added.

"Well, I don't know what it all means," said Miss Anna somewhat contemptuously. "But as far as I'm concerned everybody can join in if they wish to. What do you say, Miss Vyvyan? D'you feel inclined for raw eggs—and iodin?"

Miss Vyvyan was about to say "No" when she saw Artz's black eyes fixed upon her. To her own surprise she uttered a "Yes, please."

Artz smiled, not pleasantly. "We will all take this curious mixture then," said Mr. Meyer.

"I don't know," said Artz, looking at Pauline in whose gray eyes astonishment was plainly visible, "that Miss Iselle need trouble to swallow my brew. Youth has no need of these —tonics."

"Oh, a tonic! Is that all?" said Miss Anna.

"Did you invent it?" asked Meyer.

"I did," said Artz.

At this moment Bowchier came in with a tray, followed by a footman carrying a second tray.

"Now, my dear Artz!" said Meyer. "I think there's everything you want here. Shall I help you to break the eggs?"

Miss Anna's old face was full of suppressed laughter. Miss Vyvyan looked earnest, intent and faintly suspicious. She had evidently for once forgotten Pauline and her music. Pauline had a wondering and a very childish look in her eyes as she sat watching these elderly people so mightily concerned about

renewal—whatever that exactly meant. In her youthfulness at that moment she felt very lonely and "out of it."

Now Mr. Meyer and the doctor were breaking the eggs deftly, tapping the shells on the frail edges of Venetian glass, then widening the wounds and letting the liquid pour out. Two eggs to each glass. When three glasses were partially filled Meyer said, "That's enough, isn't it?"

But Artz said: "No. I will take a dose of my own prescription to show you that I believe in it."

"Oh, very well." And again the light tap of shells on a glass rim. "There!" said Meyer. "And the rest I'll leave to you." Artz looked round at Pauline. "It seems rather a shame to leave you out, Miss Iselle," he said. "Here is another glass and here are some eggs over. I think you ought to join us. Really, we cannot leave you out. *You* can drink for pure pleasure while we take our medicine."

"Thank you," said Pauline, looking embarrassed. "I don't mind trying, if you wish it."

"But why do you wish it, Dr. Artz?" exclaimed Miss Vyvyan, at last finding the words that usually struggled in torrents from her eager lips. "Why should Pauline—"

She stopped. Dr. Artz had cracked another egg shell on the edge of the fifth glass and the glutinous contents were sliding down. And, strangely, seeing reduced her to silence. And silence prevailed while Artz added to the eggs in each glass with a grave precision the specified amount of glycerin, old brandy, and Bovril.

Then he picked up the dark blue medicine bottle and the drop distiller and carefully added five drops of liquid to each of the five brews. This done, he took a teaspoon, very gently stirred the contents of each glass, laid the spoon down and said:

"Now it is ready. Do not sip it. Drink it down as I do."

And he lifted one of the glasses to his mouth and swallowed the pick-me-up with quick relish.

Mr. Meyer handed a glass to Miss Vyvyan, another to his sister. Then he came to Pauline. "Here is yours, Miss Iselle."

She took it from his thin, aged hands with reluctance. She didn't want the stuff. But apparently they were all expecting her to drink. So she drank, slowly, and put her glass down. As she did this an odd feeling of warmth went through her, of seething warmth. Her embarrassment left her suddenly and she smiled, without knowing why. Self-confidence came to her and she wanted to sing.

"Not so bad, is it?" said Artz. "Your brandy is wonderful, Monsieur Meyer."

"But it's gone to my head," said Miss Vyvyan, flushing.

"Brandy like that can't harm anyone," said Miss Anna, who was looking almost gay, like one who felt optimistic.

"I must say your drink has a tremendously tonic effect, Dr. Artz," said Mr. Meyer. "I feel it already." He drew himself up. He was looking at Pauline. "Miss Iselle saw the beauty and value of my table downstairs," he said to Miss Vyvyan abruptly. "She has a natural flair for beauty, and that is an excellent substitute for knowledge and cultivation. My sister here worships culture, but I have always realized that a right instinct is worth all the being told in the world. Miss Iselle will find her own way. I told her so down-stairs, didn't I?"

He turned with unusual animation to Pauline.

"Yes, and I felt I should be able to," said Pauline.

"Nature's all very well, but the merely natural in art can never hold its own against a gift which has been assiduously cultivated, trained, educated," said Miss Anna, suddenly turning upon, rather than turning to, Pauline. "All the great people have worked, worked, worked to improve themselves. Read their lives. But, I remember, you never read anything."

"Pauline can sing. That's what she was born for, and that's what her life will be—singing!" exclaimed Miss Vyvyan defiantly. She looked quickly round the great room. In a distant corner, under a landscape by Sisley, stood a grand piano. "Don't you want to hear her, Miss Meyer?"

"That depends on what she sings," said the uncompromising Jewess. "Can't you sing something German; some Brahms, Schumann, Schubert?"

"Pauline can sing Schubert's 'Hark, Hark, the lark!' " said Miss Vyvyan, getting up eagerly.

"That will do. Do you sing it in German?"

"I'm afraid I—"

"Oh, well, let us have it in English then."

"I've done my best for Pauline," said Miss Vyvyan anxiously, "but without money what you would call a complete education is impossible."

"Education isn't everything," said Meyer. "Governesses are educated and remain—governesses. Let us hear you sing." Pauline felt the soft, cup-like clasp on her elbow. "And"—he lowered his voice—"don't let my sister's mania for culture disturb you. There are people—women—at the top of the world who know nothing that is to be found in the textbooks. Sing—with your temperament, if you have one. Have you one?" he whispered, in a strange, husky voice.

"I don't know," Pauline murmured uneasily.

"Now, Pauline!" Miss Vyvyan at the piano began giving directions. She seemed unusually excited. "This is your opportunity," she whispered. "If you can bring it off now—"

"Then please let me do it in my own way." The girl's cheeks were flushed. Her eyes were shining. She looked self-possessed and determined.

Miss Vyvyan regarded her with astonishment. "It's the brandy!" she thought. But Miss Vyvyan had had brandy, too, to say nothing of iodin and other ingredients, and she was conscious of an unusual bounding vitality, of a recklessness that was able to sympathize with Pauline. Freedom! Yes, it was good to be free, to run loose, to have your will, to cut away all the leading strings. She dropped her clever hands on the keys.

Miss Anna was by nature extremely critical. Nothing mediocre, even though it were clever in its way, ever appealed to her. She only liked the best, and she had no expectation of getting the best from an ignorant girl, however attractive. Nevertheless, though she was not fully aware of it, she was in a quite unusually receptive mood that afternoon. A quick power of enjoyment had come to the birth within her.

Pauline had a naturally beautiful voice, and now, instead of concentrating on defects, Miss Anna was able, amazingly, to concentrate on that. Certainly she had heard the song better sung. Yet she had seldom liked it so much, liked it with such simplicity and complete spontaneous acceptance.

She enjoyed it, enjoyed it very much, astonishingly much. Had that anything to do with Dr. Artz and his extraordinary pick-me-up? In the midst of her cordial words and kind gestures Miss Anna kept on asking herself that. Everyone seemed so exceptionally vital that evening—for evening was falling; yet no one seemed to be aware of it. Even Leo had lost much of the world-weariness she had long been accustomed to. His eyes of course were always intensely alive, but now there was a strong stir of life in his body. His movements were swifter than usual, his voice was more energetic. It was impossible to say he looked happy. One could not conceive of Leo looking actually happy. But there was an approach towards happiness in the vitality he was showing.

The pick-me-up was extraordinary.

She was almost conscious of that strange condition, long forgotten by her if indeed ever fully experienced, in which the creature is strongly aware of the joy of life.

"It's the iodin mixed with the brandy! Or—was it iodin?"

"Was that iodin you put into your pick-me-up, Dr. Artz?"

"Of course, it was. What makes you ask?"

As he spoke he looked from Miss Anna to Meyer, then to Miss Vyvyan who was still at the piano playing, improvising, humming, and then to Pauline. He saw in the girl's eyes an ardent light, and felt that he looked at ambition, the desire of high adventure, young, eager, and fearless. Miss Vyvyan, always alert and enthusiastic, was now become almost formidable in her energy. "Pauline! The great song from 'Louise.' Let's see if we can manage that. I feel as if we could bring anything off today."

And Pauline didn't hang back, yet it didn't seem to be obedience which sent her again to the piano—not obedience but ardor.

"What makes you ask?"

"The effect of your pick-me-up is extraordinary."

"I know how to combine. Then you do feel renewal?"

"I feel terribly vital. I am a vital woman by nature. But you've increased— Hush! Really she *is* a lark!" The last words were whispered. "Old brandy, Bovril, iodin, glycerin!" She looked at her brother. There was, to her, something sinister in his unwonted animation. A return to youth, or to a definite semblance of youth, in such a man, would be tragic surely, if not for him then for others. Better to pass beyond the power of indulgence in mania than to renew that power in old age. She saw man voyaging onward towards release, then suddenly tacking with intent to go back. And Artz was ready to help Leo.

She saw Leo in the hands of Artz and a feeling of dread came to her. The extra vitality she was aware of seemed to rush into dread, to fill it out, to make it important. An increase of vitality can cause an increase of the ugly things in a human being that torment. She knew that now and was troubled. For she had a great affection for her brother, though she had often secretly condemned him. But they had to care for each other. So it was ordained. In the same house they had grown old together, and now this half Italian, half Swiss doctor had come into their lives—to interfere.

"You've never sung so well before, Pauline. I'm pleased with you. You really let yourself go." Miss Vyvyan got up from the piano. She was looking triumphant. She spoke to Meyer. "Hasn't she a future, if she can only have the right training?"

Before Meyer answered, Dr. Artz said,

"You should send this young lady to study at Zurich."

"At Zurich!" exclaimed Miss Vyvyan. "There's no great singing tradition at Zurich."

"Of course you've heard of Marakoff?"

"D'you mean the great Russian tenor who used to sing at Covent Garden before the war?"

"Yes."

"He's sung for us in this very room," said Miss Anna.

"There were honey and olive-oil in his voice in legato passages," said Mr. Meyer. "Exquisite smoothness. Didn't he die in the Russian Revolution?"

"No. He lost his whole fortune and his voice in it. Now he's living in Zurich and wants pupils. Mademoiselle Iselle ought to go to him. He's a great artist and has a great method."

"That's an idea!" said Meyer. "One would like to help Marakoff. Strange how famous singers disappear, and how ungrateful we are to them. I thought he was dead—when I thought about him at all. Would you like to go to Zurich, Miss Iselle?"

"I don't know. I've never been to Switzerland. But I should like to be taught by a great artist."

Miss Vyvyan suddenly felt jealousy of Marakoff dart through her. "Milan is the great school of singing," she said. "The tradition of the Scala—" She stopped. Artz lived in Zurich. Again there came into her mind the ugly thought, "What are they up to?"

She reiterated her conviction that to become a finished opera singer one must go to Italy to study, and preferably to Milan. But when she had done she heard Meyer say, in a thin decisive voice:

"Marakoff and Zurich! I think that's a good idea of yours, Dr. Artz." And she knew that if Meyer paid he would call the Zurich tune.

The horrible power of money! She kicked against it. But anything was better than that Pauline should not be helped. And surely Meyer was going to help her. And Marakoff had been a very great singer; and had the Italian method. But—Zurich! Dr. Artz would be there. And she knew now that she was quite definitely afraid of Dr. Artz.

"I think I should like to be taught by a Russian."

"Why, Pauline?" said Miss Vyvyan sharply. "What do you know about Russians?"

"Perhaps it's the North at work in her," said Meyer. "Blood

often speaks when the brain says nothing." He looked animated, lively almost. "And Zurich is a very nice, quiet sort of city. Less dangerous than Milan—in certain ways." He was smiling as he gazed at Pauline. "The study of an art is a very serious matter, isn't it, Anna? The fewer distractions that are thrown in a student's way the better. A nice quiet Swiss pension—that's the thing!"

Already he was apportioning Pauline's life, it seeemd. Then he must mean to pay for her. But Miss Vyvyan felt as if a possession were being stealthily filched from her. She believed she had brought off a *coup* and triumphed—for Pauline. But there was fear mingled with her triumph. And both were unnaturally violent.

"That pick-me-up was too strong!" she said, looking at Artz. "Pauline, we ought to be going."

Artz smiled. When he smiled he was very ugly. Miss Anna hadn't replied to her brother's question. She got up to say good-by.

"Why did you say the pick-me-up was too strong?" she asked. "Has it gone to your head?"

"It has made me feel horribly reckless as if I wanted to do all sorts of absurd things."

"What things?"

"I don't know. Unsuitable things."

"I know," said Miss Anna, "I know." She frowned. She had very thick dark eyebrows, artificially darkened. They made a pent-house now above her intelligent eyes. "Perhaps that's Dr. Artz's secret; the power to make people wish to do unsuitable things, and do them."

"Nonsense, Anna!" said her brother irritably. "I hate that word 'unsuitable.' Suitable—unsuitable! Limiting words!" He turned to Pauline. "Such words oughtn't to be in any artist's vocabulary," he said to her. "Mind that!"

His manner just then was so possessive, so peculiar, that Miss Vyvyan shivered with resentment.

"But he's going to pay for Pauline," she said to herself. "He must be going to pay or he couldn't behave like this."

IX

IT was early summer time in Zurich when Dr. Artz announced to his friend, Anton Marakoff, that he had found him a new pupil, "An English lark with silver-gray eyes who wants to be trained to sing by a Russian! *Qu'en pensez-vous, mon ami?*"

"She has sympathy with my unfortunate country?" asked the vivid wreck that was Marakoff, a big creature crammed with talent which he could no longer show through his voice. That had left him permanently, gone with his once robust health in the revolution which had stripped him of his fortune. "She is anti-Bolshevik?"

"She is neither pro nor anti anything. She does not follow current events. What does she care how the world goes, who is up or down in politics? She wishes to sing well, marvelously well. That is her only thought, her only desire. So she is coming to you. There is an old monkey who wished, who still wishes, to carry her off to Milan. All the great teachers are in Italy of course! But he who pays attends to me, and I have spoken for you."

Marakoff's slanting pale eyes examined his friend Artz with a fixity that was rather cold. He did not look very grateful. But he said: "You are kind to think of your unfortunate friends, the Russian bores who are the curse of noble-hearted Europe, indigent Asiatics, full of bizarre manias, for indulgence in which once they were able to pay, but now can pay no longer."

"If you would listen to me you could pay for any indulgences. And you could make me world-famous. I swear that I could give you back your voice. Think of it! I should be the man who gave back to Marakoff the great voice which he had utterly lost, not a whisper of which remained. Why won't you believe in me?"

"That's not natural!" He made a large disgusted gesture with one big arm and hand. "Giving back hair to the bald

heads of old men! Giving the power to have children to old women long past the age! What would such children be like? Babies with mothers of fifty, of fifty-five, of sixty perhaps! Horrible! And the glands of sheep, of bulls, of pigs even, in one's body! For it appears that monkeys are not at all necessary."

"Of course not! The monkeys were only a means of *réclame*. Now, Marakoff, don't be so foolish! Why not trust yourself to me?"

"I won't! Never! God is in my destiny, and, bad as I am, I shall never try to interfere with God. Besides, the knife—after all I have seen in the war!"

"The operation—"

"I tell you I will not! I bow to destiny. Bring me pupils and I will teach them what I know. My genius I cannot give them. My method, if they are not fools, I can. And this silver-eyed lark, and this old monkey, and this he who pays? Who and what are they?"

"The one who pays, you know."

"Who is it?"

"Leon Meyer, the Jewish banker."

"Monsieur Leon! I have sung for him. Monsieur Leon pays for the lark?"

"He is going to."

"And the old monkey?"

In a few words Artz explained Miss Vyvyan.

"She is your patient? She wishes to have children?"

"She hasn't said so. It would be amusing to try some experiments on her. I think she is afraid of me."

"A man of science with your humor may well make people afraid. You shall never touch me. And so it is Monsieur Leon who pays for the lark!"

Marakoff—they were in a quiet corner of Huguenin's, where Artz was playing host among the chocolates and cakes—stretched out his hand to a fondant.

"He has paid for so many. Money . . . French furniture, music, girls—there you have Monsieur Leon whole, in the round, as they say in England. Then he has not finished yet?

Wonderful! He must be twenty years older than I am. Yes, there is no one who will pay like a Jew for what he really wants, because he wants more than any Christian is able to want. He wants with the whole of him, not only with a part, like the Christian. But why call her a lark? No lark should give herself to Monsieur Leon. In doing that she would cease to be a lark. Life, you know, Artz, enters into the voice as desert sand into crevices. A voice can be many things but it cannot be innocent once the simplicity of virtue has gone."

"Miss Iselle has not given herself to Meyer."

"But then why is he to pay?"

"He can be charitable."

"Why try to deceive me, Artz? Do you not know yet how intelligent I am?"

"It is as I say. Meyer, who as you must know is a patron of music, has taken a fancy to the voice of this girl."

"If she has a voice I will take her. When is she coming?"

"Almost immediately. Any day now. You must get her ready for opera."

"We will see what the voice is like and if there is any temperament with it."

"The little girl has talent."

Marakoff stared across the small table at Artz. He had a robust frame, broad shoulders, the deep chest of one who had sung much with a mighty voice. Life had assaulted him. Destiny had pierced him. He showed the marks. He looked older by years than he was. But there was still something mighty about the man. A broad, full nature was housed in his large frame, and in spite of *douleurs* he had a great carelessness which would never leave him. The creature was big in more ways than one.

"You are a bad man, Artz."

"I say the little girl has talent."

"And I say you are a bad man."

"Where is the link?"

"Do you know what is the curse of this world?"

"Well—what is it?"

"It is lust. Lust muddies all the waters. Wherever man sees bright clearness—as in the streams of this little land—his instinct is to introduce at once mud. A lark, you say! And Meyer, Monsieur Leon, after it! And you! You, to be mingled with a lark's destiny!"

"And you, *mon cher Marakoff!*"

"I! I pretend to nothing. But if I undertake the training of a veritable lark I shall protect her song. You understand me? I shall protect her song."

There was something almost menacing in his voice, in his manner, as he said the last words. But Artz was quite unperturbed. His small black eyes twinkled. His short, protruding body looked puffily self-possessed. He settled the bill and the two men went out into Bahnhofstrasse. Artz had a call to pay at the Baur-au-Lac. Marakoff left him near the entrance.

"I'll stroll by the lake. You can join me if she lets you. If not I'll go home."

"Home" was the flat he occupied on the farther side of the lake. He lived alone with a Russian valet. Vague women, formerly connected with him, wives or mistresses, had disappeared in the revolution. He had no legitimate children.

Marakoff walked on towards the lake; down to its edge. On his left at some distance was a bath establishment for men, with swimming facilities and an enclosure for sun bathing. Leaning on the rail of the jetty which sticks out just there into the lake he could see the heads of the swimmers, the bronzed bodies of those about to dive poised high above the water; other bronzed bodies moving to and fro in the sunshine or stretched out prone on the hot wood of the enclosure. Presently a loud baritone voice hailed him from the water.

"Hullo, maestro!"

"Mein lieber Carl!"

A jovial Swiss face, but not typical of the country for it had a strongly intellectual, even a romantic, expression for all its geniality, smiled up from the water showing magnificent rows of white teeth.

"Are not you coming in, maestro?" He shook back his wet

auburn hair from his high square forehead, treading water and still looking up.

"I cannot bathe. I have been eating cakes and drinking chocolate at Huguenin's with Dr. Artz." The swimmer twisted his boyish face. He could look a thorough man but often suddenly looked like a boy. "He is at the Baur-au-Lac. I am supposed to be waiting for him."

"Take a sun bath anyhow! I will swim back and meet you." And without waiting for an answer, he struck out vigorously in the direction of the baths, cleaving a way through the water with powerful arms. Marakoff watched him. A sad expression had come into his long narrow eyes, sad but not cruel. That favorite pupil of his at this time represented youth to him. He found something symbolic in Carl Fügler, whose strong body seemed to the ruined singer to house the whole bright spirit of youth.

Marakoff left the jetty, made his way to the entrance of the bath establishment, paid and went in. He took off his clothes, put on a pair of white shorts and walked to the sun-bath which was about half full of people taking the "nature cure." Carl came to him shining with lake drops and bronzed by the sun.

Carl was nearly as tall as his master, but much slighter, though obviously very strong. He was German-Swiss, but spoke fluent English, as well as French and a little Italian. He had thick, crisp auburn hair, coming to a point on his bumpy forehead, and growing over his strong, hard-looking head without any parting. His eyes were hazel, and in their remarkable steadiness had a formidable expression. His features were good, though on the rough side. His voice, like the rest of him, was powerful, and his laugh was a very definite explosion of humor or joy. He had big out-of-door hands. His age was twenty-five. His whole man gleamed with supreme health. Marakoff's friendly nickname for him was "Testa Dura."

"Let's lie down here, maestro." They stretched themselves side by side on the warm wooden floor. "Dr. Artz will not find you here. He never takes sun-baths. At least he never takes them here."

"Why did you twist your face over him, Testa Dura?"

"He's a friend of yours, I know. But I do not like Artz."

"But you scarcely know him. You told me so."

"Oh, everyone in Zurich knows Artz. He's becoming famous, they say. The Baur-au-Lac ought to pay him a commission on the old worn-out things who begin to flock here with hands full of money to be made potent by Artz. Potent!" He twisted his face again. "That is what he concentrates on, I believe."

"Artz has declared to me that he could bring back my voice."

"How?"

"By an operation followed by the taking of some preparation of his."

"Do not have it! What a filthy idea!"

"You never heard my voice."

"No. I wish I had. It must have been grand."

"It was me in sound." He struck his broad bare chest. "Me coming out of here. Suppose Artz *could* bring it back?"

"He could not. Do not you believe it."

"I have refused to be treated. And yet I am tempted. I am tempted, Testa Dura. With my voice I was a famous magician. Without it I am only a poor old singing master." He turned again and lay on his back, and in that position said, "I am to have a new pupil."

"Lord grant he is a tenor!"

"He is a girl. . . . It is the kind friend Artz who brings the lark to my door. She comes from England and has but one wish, to become a singer in opera."

"She is like me in that."

"No."

"What do you mean, maestro? You know how ambitious—"

"I know you have many wishes, not only one. You want to sing, but your interests spread. At one time you are all political and din into me the wickedness and absurdity of the politicians. At another you talk only of books. Then you are a pacifist and you will spend hours in crying out against war, as if you wished to make another, having lost all in the last one. Are you not a

sportsman, too? Is it not all shooting with you at one season, all fishing, all golfing at another? And then cards! And the orchestra—and the piano—and your painting— You a man with one wish! You have a thousand."

But here Carl interrupted him with a stentorian roar of laughter, in which without hesitation, the great Russian heartily joined.

"Youth, youth! It is youth stretching out its arms greedy for all the empires!" he said, suddenly getting on his feet with remarkable elasticity for so big a man.

"Artz! He can never manufacture real youth, like yours. It must, it can only be a perhaps clever pretense. I will not have that operation. I will not sing with the glands of Swiss sheep or of pigs from the Dolder. Perhaps it is not meant that the old should be young. Artz is trying to interfere with the great design. I shall tell him so. Or"—he smiled rather maliciously, nearly shutting his eyes till they were little more than long slanting slits—"or I will make you tell him. That would be more amusing. You have such a vocabulary and you do hate friend Artz."

"Oh, I do not really hate anybody, maestro. I have not got it in me to hate."

"I do not know. I do not know. I think you hate Artz." And then they went to the dressing-rooms.

Carl Fügler certainly wasn't given to hatred, but something —the youth in him probably—felt an instinctive shrinking from Artz. That shrinking, not timid but rising from a powerful desire of avoidance, was not peculiar to Carl but was shared by many of his companions, the young men of Zurich.

Zurich, although it is the biggest city in Switzerland, is not very large, and Artz not only as a name but as a personality was almost universally known there. As his notoriety increased beyond the borders of Switzerland it not unnaturally increased in his native town. He had always been noted there for his cleverness, his originality and his almost contemptuous audacity. He had always possessed the faculty of rousing the jealousy and the irritated envy of those competing with him

in the struggle of life, of his fellow students and, later, of his colleagues and rivals. But now he had against him strangely the feeling of youth.

He had been a brilliant student. His capacities had been recognized by all those who had had anything to do with him. Examinations had given little trouble to him. Always he had been very sure of himself and unafraid of those who were competing against him. As a doctor he had been successful, partly because of his skill which was undeniable, but partly also—some thought mainly—because of his extremely strong personality, which seemed to be helped, not hindered, by his powerful ugliness. Artz was very ugly, so ugly that no one could possibly think him anything else. His body without being absolutely misshapen was extremely odd, unlike the ordinary body of man. It suggested obesity, although he was not really obese. It sloped forward from the base of the throat and terminated in legs that were far too short to be in proportion with it. The back, in contradiction with the prominent frontal development, was exaggeratedly hollow. Artz generally gave the impression of a man who was holding himself up with determination; but he was obviously strong. The effort, if effort there was, came out of strength, not weakness.

When an ugly man is successful with women it doesn't endear him to his own sex. Artz's three marriages had upset a good many men. His two divorces had caused two scandals. Zurich knew that Artz's wives had, incomprehensibly, been devoted to him. They hadn't sought divorces. They had even fought against them. But they had had to give in to Artz. Both had consented eventually to divorce, renouncing the struggle against his determination to have done with them.

He would surely marry again presently. All Zurich expected it.

His fame—if it could be called fame; perhaps notoriety would be the better word—outside of Zurich, outside of Switzerland, had been brought about not by his skill as an ordinary surgeon or his gift of diagnosis as a physician, but by his persistent assertion that certain powers of youth and vigorous middle

life could be restored to elderly and worn-out people who had lost them. Artz was not a spurious beauty specialist masquerading in the guise of a qualified doctor. He was not apparently a charlatan. He was a serious scientific man with firm beliefs and the ability, so he said, to prove them to others. Already the monkey gland theory had astonished and entertained the world. Artz laughed at the concentration on monkeys. It was not a case of monkeys with him. He asserted that all that was claimed to be done by the using of monkeys he could do if not a single monkey existed in the whole of creation.

The enmity of youth, not usually manifested but widely felt towards Artz in Zurich, was a curiously subtle phenomenon. It had not come into being suddenly because of some blatant happening, some deed that cried to Heaven. But it had become generally known among young men of the student class, the type to which Carl Fügler belonged, that Artz, himself obviously a sensualist, was concentrating on restoring to those who had "lived their lives" the possibility of indulging in the body the desires which still existed in the mind.

And this disgusted youth, roused in youth a deep-seated resentment, the base of which lay far down among the life-breeding instincts, stirred up in youth the sometimes quiescent antagonism which both youth and age often feel for each other. Youth was able to laugh at old people merely aping the natural liveliness that no longer bubbled up in them without effort, but if old people were to be enabled to go on loving, and even breeding, when the time for both, if nature took its course, was over—that was a different matter. That was an attack on youth in its citadel.

Artz, it seemed, was concentrating on such an attack. He was, however, only beginning to develop it at this time. Rumors were in the air. This or this was whispered or said. Strange, and in many cases extremely unattractive, specimens of humanity arrived in Zurich and remained there, drawn there, it was generally understood, not by the charms of the city with its river and lake, its surrounding woods, its good music, comfortable hotels, and sporting facilities, but by Dr. Hermann

Artz. From time to time some among these specimens disappeared. They had returned to their own places, their own countries. Renovated? Able to dispute the spoils of life with youth? One did not know. The patients of Dr. Artz came and went, mysteriously. But the Carl Füglers of Zurich, coming across certain battered and feverish fragments from the human workshop, in Huguenin's, at the Baur-au-Lac, the Savoy, on the Dolder, or in the gardens by the lakeside, would murmur with a twist of healthy disgust, "That one is surely here because of Artz."

But Artz wasn't at all satisfied yet with his position. He wanted to have a resounding success. Marakoff could, perhaps, give it him—perhaps. For he wasn't yet certain that he could bring back that famous departed voice. But Marakoff wouldn't allow him to make the trial. Not yet! But Artz was persistent by nature, as he had proved with two of his wives.

Then there was Leon Meyer. Artz had his eye very much on Leon Meyer. The Jew was a man with a mania. By exploiting that mania it might surely be possible to use Meyer as a means of *réclame*. A promise might be obtained before any cure was completed or was even fully on the way. Meyer was as well known among all the people who matter as any member of the famous Rothschild family. He was "Mr. Leon" all over Europe; even in Egypt and America.

Artz understood with exactitude the value to him of Meyer. And now, through him, the understanding Artz, the lark was coming to Zurich.

X

PAULINE ISELLE arrived in Zurich under the care of Miss Vyvyan. It was natural enough that Miss Vyvyan should take her abroad for the first time to launch her in her new life. Pauline had ventured something about Miss Vyvyan being spared the trouble of the journey to Switzerland and had murmured the name of "daddy" in that connection. But

"daddy" had promptly been swept out of the picture as wholly incompetent to deal with such a matter adequately.

"Of course I must see your master. I'm not going to allow your voice to be ruined for anyone. I've got to be satisfied, thoroughly satisfied, about things at Zurich before I leave you there all alone. It's through me that you're going there. I should be wanting in my duty if I chanced anything in connection with your future."

Pauline packed her boxes, kissed her good-looking, lethargic mother and her non-successful but entertaining father, and set forth rather anxiously with her determined protector.

On arriving in Zurich they went to the Eden Hotel on the left bank of the lake beyond the Stadt Theater. The weather was hot and blue. Pauline, who had never been on the Continent before, was lost in a waking dream which rather worried Miss Vyvyan. Miss Vyvyan was in a high state of excitement. This was a great new departure which agitated her whole nervous system. She felt at the same time triumphant and frustrated; triumphant because she had procured the money for Pauline's musical education; frustrated because that education was not to take place at Milan as she had fully intended it should, but at Zurich where Dr. Artz lived.

Dr. Artz had got the better of her in that matter. She was fully aware of that. She had an uneasy feeling that he was probably a man who usually got the better of those with whom he had to do. He had succeeded in troubling her life as no other person, woman or man, had ever succeeded in troubling it. Sometimes she fancied that he had some obscure design in connection with herself. At other times she told herself that she was a fool for imagining such a thing.

She disliked the idea of Pauline's living in the same town with him. Indeed, she had brooded over this ever since the arrangement about Zurich had been made, and had wondered and mentally debated whether it would be wise to warn Pauline to be careful with Dr. Artz, or whether to do that would be to put perhaps idiotic ideas into her innocent young head. It was far more natural to Miss Vyvyan to speak out all

that was in her mind than to be cautious and silent; but when Artz had mysteriously assaulted her native simplicity he had turned her away from what lay at the basis of her character. She could never again be quite so happily simple as she had been.

And now they were to meet Dr. Artz. As he was a friend of Marakoff's, he would take them to the master's studio.

The girl was standing by a window that looked out to the leafy promenade and the lake. She seemed totally unexcited.

"I do wonder what you're thinking about, Pauline. I never know. Is it about your career?"

"No. I was thinking how happy the boys and girls must be in those boats. I should love to be out in a boat in the evening."

"Out in a boat! You've got to work. You're here to work hard. You mustn't waste a moment of time. We've got to justify ourselves to Mr. Meyer, to make him feel it was worth his while spending all this money."

"I should love to sing on the water."

Something in the sound of the girl's voice gave to Miss Vyvyan, who had the artist in her as well as the pedagogue, a sensation of youth and dreaming. She hesitated, looking at Pauline. "But now about Dr. Artz!"

"Yes?" Pauline turned round from the window and looked less dreamy.

"Do you like him?"

"I should think he's very clever."

"He is, no doubt. Do you like him?"

"He's dreadfully ugly, I think."

Miss Vyvyan felt much relieved. Nevertheless she had an impulse to stand up for Artz. "He's got a very clever head," she said. "He reminds me somehow of Beethoven. The famous photograph, I mean. You've seen it. I showed it to you once."

"Yes, I remember. But I think Beethoven must have been almost beautiful in comparison with Dr. Artz."

"I dare say he was. But still—still Dr. Artz has attracted people." She was thinking of the three wives, all pretty women.

"Has he?" Pauline's voice sounded indifferent. She was

evidently feeling very detached from Dr. Artz. Miss Vyvyan decided to say nothing more.

At five Dr. Artz was at the hotel.

Seeing him now in Switzerland, Miss Vyvyan at first found him slightly less unusual than she had thought him in England. But certainly he did look remarkably ugly. He wore a "summer suit." It was made of some very pale straw-colored material. In it his figure had a very peculiar appearance, *bombé* in front, hollow behind, in the back. On his head, when they went out, he placed a very large hat, imitation Panama. His feet were shod with strapped shoes, leather and canvas. She noticed that he carried an unusual and beautiful cane. It looked as if it were made of tortoise-shell, with an amber crook and a monogram worked in gold on the back.

He showed no special interest in Pauline as the three of them walked first towards a *pension* which he thought would suit her. His conversation was mainly addressed to Miss Vyvyan. About the *pension* he said:

"It is a good one, large and airy. I have sent some of my patients from abroad there. They have been quite satisfied with it."

"I suppose you have many patients from all over Europe," she said.

"Hardly that. But my time is pretty well filled up. Not only with patients. I have my experiments."

He looked at her from under the imitation Panama hat as he said the last words and again, as in England, she felt that he was considering her as material. No man had ever before looked at her like that, with such a cool, appraising and surely scientific gaze. His small black eyes seemed to be exploring her bodily condition, but considering her nature, too. She felt soul and body at that moment acutely as two terribly separate things, and Artz was weighing both with a "How would it be with that? And how with *that?*"

The *pension*—it had the name Pension Müller—took up the first and second floors in a large apartment house. It was, as Artz had said, large, airy, and it was exquisitely clean. In

it there was something of the atmosphere of a sanatorium, Miss Vyvyan thought. But of course no nurses were to be seen, only a not rosy-faced maid servant, and Madame Müller, the proprietress.

Madame Müller was somehow not what Miss Vyvyan had expected. She was not a broad-bosomed motherly "body," German-Swiss from the crown of a head covered with plainly arranged gray hair to the soles of a pair of large solid feet. Instead she actually was thin, quite smart in a modern way, with short dark hair, refined features, and eager, intellectual brown eyes, eyes surely of a reader, an observer, even of a thinker. Miss Vyvyan, who was withheld by no scruple from making inquiries, learned that Madame Müller was of South German origin, was a widow, and the sister of a man well known in Zurich, Herr Alfred Weber, who kept a famous antiquity shop quite near, in Niemannstrasse. She was evidently on friendly terms with Dr. Artz, and she showed at once a marked interest in Pauline, of whom of course Artz had already spoken to her.

Miss Vyvyan was pleased. Terms were spoken of, Dr. Artz now joining in the conversation, a nice small bedroom, in which Pauline would be permitted to have an upright piano and to practice at certain hours, was seen, and Madame Müller showed them the dining and "conversation" rooms. In the latter there was a semi-grand Blüthner piano, to which Miss Vyvyan was irresistibly attracted.

"Do try it, madame," said Madame Müller.

"Why not?" said Miss Vyvyan. And she sat down and began to play Schumann's "Carnival."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Madame Müller when at last the final chord was struck. "You have the true classical tradition. Such purity! Such finish! Hasn't she, Dr. Artz?"

Dr. Artz slowly nodded his powerful head.

"She is a true musician," he said. "That is certain."

"May I venture to come in?" said a woman's voice with a foreign accent. "How do you do, doctor?"

And there came into the room and up to the piano a small, beautifully made woman, with yellow-white hair and restless

light eyes, rather peculiarly dressed in pure white. The gown was expensive and came from Paris, but it was made in a mode not typically fashionable, with an unusually long skirt.

"I choose to have it so," was expressed in the gown.

The wearer looked wilful. She might be anything between fifty and sixty. Her eyes were terribly unsatisfied.

Artz presented Miss Vyvyan and Pauline to her, naming her "Princess Teresco." In the short conversation that followed Miss Vyvyan learned that this Roumanian princess was a patient of Artz and had rooms in the *pension,* having moved there from the Baur-au-Lac because she didn't wish "just now to meet a lot of people I know." She seemed to be violently musical and was obviously impressed by Miss Vyvyan's talent.

"When you began to play I could hardly believe it," she said. "I heard you through the wall. When you got to the march I thought it must be a man playing. And yet there was a lot of classical restraint in it somehow." She looked hard at Miss Vyvyan and her eyes for a moment held a cruel expression. "You must have studied tremendously. Have you come here for Dr. Artz?"

Hastily Miss Vyvyan denied that and explained Pauline. The princess looked at Pauline and made the brief comment, "Indeed!" Miss Vyvyan had a feeling that the light restless eyes had looked on Pauline with disfavor. But why?

When she was again in the street—on the way to Marakoff's studio—Dr. Artz said turning definitely towards Miss Vyvyan: "Your playing today was better, much better even, than your playing at Lady Braybridge's. You are a genuine classical player."

Miss Vyvyan was almost painfully pleased. She felt a heat of pleasure run all through her.

"You have a romantic imagination, too," Artz added, "but it does not do to live always in the imagination. That enfevers the body and tries the nerves too much. The imagination needs moments of translation into concrete action. Otherwise it is like spurring a race-horse into an abyss. Do you know what I mean?"

"Yes," said Miss Vyvyan, with suddenly sober gravity.

"Does not your imagination sometimes persecute you?" he continued.

After a silence, she said again, "Yes."

He turned and began to talk to Pauline about Marakoff and Marakoff's method in singing. They were walking slowly, for the summer heat was great, and they were now going up-hill.

"Is it far?" Miss Vyvyan heard Pauline say. And there was excitement in her clear melodious voice, which even in speaking always sounded like the voice of a singer.

"No. We are close to it. You see those trees?" He pointed with a powerful hand, a hand that had performed many operations. "Marakoff's studio is in that garden. I found it for him."

"Oh! There's someone singing!" said Pauline, stopping just outside the garden. "A man! Is it Monsieur Marakoff?" Artz shook his big head. "He never sings. His voice has gone."

"It's a pupil?" said Miss Vyvyan.

"Probably."

She listened. "That man sings well."

"I love his voice!" said Pauline.

Artz opened the garden gate. At the back of the garden was a good-sized, typically German-Swiss house of roughcast and wood, with balconies and window-boxes full of geraniums, nasturtiums, and petunias. On the right, and isolated, was Marakoff's studio. Artz tapped on the door, then at once opened it. "You can go in. He is expecting us."

Miss Vyvyan went in, followed eagerly by Pauline.

XI

WHEN they came into the studio, which was a bare place with whitewashed walls, a grand piano on a low platform, a few chairs, and one big table littered with pipes, cigarette boxes, and papers, Carl Fügler and his master were standing by the piano in such ardent discussion that they hadn't heard Artz's

knock and did not notice the visitors until the accompanist, a German-Swiss youth with fair hair, and a face much like that of the young Mozart, took Marakoff by the sleeve and whispered something to him.

"Ach so!" Marakoff turned round, looking, to Pauline, enormous. Both men on the platform looked at that moment enormous to her, raised as they were above her, dominating her and Miss Vyvyan.

"The pupil! Is this the girl pupil, Friend Artz?" exclaimed Marakoff. "Of course it is! Well, how do you do?" He imprisoned one of her hands in one of his, and his slanting eyes went quickly all over her, not missing a detail. "They say you are a lark! Is that so? Tell me!"

Pauline blushed to the temples. "I don't know. I love singing."

"And so, no doubt, does every lark that ever sang above the dewdrops before the lazy world was awake. And who is this?" He faced Miss Vyvyan in large inquiry. "Your chaperon, come to take care of you among the wicked Zurichers? Here is one! Carl Fügler, my pupil, a fine baritone voice but a too versatile temperament."

Carl bowed quickly, still gazing at Pauline.

Miss Vyvyan began to explain herself and closed a lengthy exposition with some very sincere remarks about the joy she had had in the past in listening to Marakoff in various operas. "I only wish you sang still!"

During a considerable part of the time that she was speaking she was looking at Carl Fügler, as if something in his appearance drew her attention in despite of herself. But when she spoke to Marakoff of himself she fixed her brown eyes on him and spoke with such warmth that he was obviously pleased, perhaps even touched.

"Yes, I could sing. But that is all over. Others must take the empty places." He made a gesture to Pauline and Carl. "I am too old."

Artz and Carl had not spoken to each other yet, but now Artz said, "Herr Fügler, I think we have met, have we not?"

"Yes, Dr. Artz. I think so."

"Do you agree with your master?" He turned to Miss Vyvyan. "Does that man look old?"

Marakoff certainly did not look really old. There was something robust both in his general appearance and in his vigorous manner; strength in both. But life had ravaged him. That was obvious. And now he stood next to Carl, who was brilliantly young.

"I can never think of my maestro as old," replied Carl. "He sometimes seems to me younger than I am."

"I am very childish at times," said Marakoff, wrinkling his broad nose, and smiling at Pauline. "Like baby at the bottle!"

She smiled. She felt that she was going to like this big man.

"But," Carl went on, and there was something formidable in his voice as there was something formidable in his eyes, "a big voice once gone can never come back—as it was. I am dead sure of that."

"There!" exclaimed Marakoff. "Youth tells us."

A smile, pronouncedly satirical, appeared on the lips of Artz.

"The Herr Doktor does not agree with me," said Carl Fügler.

"It is wise to speak out of knowledge, Herr Fügler," said Artz.

"And of course when one is young one can know nothing. But I think, and my whole generation thinks with me, that the young have their own knowledge, and that it is worth something and not only that, but this—it will have to be listened to and attended to if the world is not to sink into the abyss that *we* see. Old eyes, one knows, often lose their sight. Young eyes can see far."

He flung out his arms. He might have been speaking to a crowd. His strong brown face seemed to Pauline to be blazing.

What a young man! He was savage! But what a lot he meant! Dr. Artz, Marakoff and Carl Fügler! They were men full of meaning. Pauline felt strangely stirred. This was dif-

ferent from daddy with his animal imitations. Hitherto, Miss Vyvyan had been the most significant temperament in Pauline's intimate life. But now even Miss Vyvyan was swamped. The energy of these males was overpowering.

Marakoff, putting an arm affectionately round his pupil's shoulder, said: "And now we will hear—eh?—the song of the lark."

"Yes, Pauline shall sing to you," exclaimed Miss Vyvyan. "But first we want to hear your pupil, Herr Carl—" She looked at Marakoff.

"Fügler," he said.

"Herr Carl Fügler. His voice sounded splendid when we were outside."

Carl's face became almost tender with simple pleasure. "Shall I sing the Fauré again, maestro?"

"Yes." The big man bent and whispered something into Carl's ear.

"Yes, I will. Yes, I won't forget. No, of course not, maestro. Come on, Fritz!" he added in German to the accompanist.

"Oh! But wait!" said Marakoff. "Ladies, this is my good friend, Fritz Rauch, an excellent pianist." The young Mozart sprang up and bowed formally. "And now—forward! *Sing, mein lieber Carl!*"

Marakoff's lips moved all the time Carl was singing. Secretly he was singing with Carl, voicelessly singing. He took breath when Carl should take breath, and, when Carl's fine voice became more emotional, when a climax of feeling came, his long eyes opened widely, he slightly lifted his head and drama showed in his ravaged, clean-shaven face. Then the great artist in him was plainly apparent. The big man was still full to the brim of drama which he no longer gave out—even to Zurich.

When Carl had finished, Marakoff simply said, to Miss Vyvyan, "Well, madame, can I teach?"

Pauline expected an outburst of praise from Miss Vyvyan, for Carl Fügler, she knew, had sung the song finely, and she

felt it was a moving and beautiful song. But Miss Vyvyan was silent for what seemed a long moment, and then she only said, "Thank you, Herr Fügler."

Pauline was amazed. She looked at Miss Vyvyan's leathery cheeks and thought they were oddly pale. There was another strange moment of total silence. A little dry sound broke it. Dr. Artz was lighting a cigarette. Pauline saw him smiling over the match.

"Now the lark!" suddenly, startlingly came from Marakoff. "It should be the nightingale as this is the evening hour. But we must risk it as we cannot put back the clock. Herr Rauch will accompany you. He can play anything at sight."

"No, I'll accompany Pauline." Miss Vyvyan had come to life. She got up. The young man backed away politely from the piano. Miss Vyvyan took his place. She began to play, a delicate charming prelude. "Come, Pauline!"

Pauline sang. She sang several things, for each time that she finished something Marakoff called out imperiously, "Go on!" And then Miss Vyvyan, excited, whispered to Fauline the name of another song, and her hands went again to the piano.

"Gallant child!" was Marakoff's comment when all was over at last. He took both Pauline's hands in his and seemed about to embrace her, but refrained at the last moment and turned to Miss Vyvyan. "You can play. Play us something. Play us some Bach."

Miss Vyvyan played Bach's great G minor organ fugue, arranged for the piano by Busoni.

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Marakoff when she finished. Miss Vyvyan seemed almost to astound him. "You two," he added, staring down from his height of body at her and Pauline, "You two must be separated."

Carl Fügler nodded emphatically.

"Separated?" said Miss Vyvyan, startled and showing it. "Why?"

"That would take some time to tell fully, madame. I speak, I say it, from two points of view, the human and the artist's. Encouragement and obliteration are very different things."

Carl Fügler's strong head moved again, and this time Miss Vyvyan saw the movement.

"Do you mean that I obliterate Pauline?"

"Madame, you do. You are not an accompanist at all. You are a classical concert pianist. You impose your own conceptions on this young lady. I want to hear *her* conceptions. Fritz!"

"Mein Herr?"

"Kindly play Schubert's 'Hark, hark, the lark!' for this young lady. And you"—he put a big hand on Miss Vyvyan's arm—"keep by me and listen. Now, Mademoiselle l'Alouette, kindly sing to us again."

And Pauline sang again, to the young Mozart's accompaniment.

"There! Now we hear her as *she* is!" said Marakoff, when the song was finished. "Released from the classical tradition, and from your strong personality, madame."

"Well, really!"

"Do you not see it? You do. You are an artist and cannot help seeing it. I will take this young lady. I will try to help her to develop. But she must learn to fly quite alone, not buoyed up by anyone. If she is a lark, you, madame, are a powerful airship." He broke out into a sonorous laugh. It seemed to break a tension. Everyone laughed, except Dr. Artz.

A business talk began, and Carl felt it the proper thing to say good-by and leave the studio with Fritz Rauch. Pauline's small pretty hand lay in his for the first time. It had a peculiar coolness and softness which seemed individual to him, and in close accord with her eyes, in which he saw dreams, clouds, strange lights, so many things in the silver gray. She was wondering about him. He saw that. But he did not see that she was rather afraid of him.

When he said good-by to Miss Vyvyan she looked at him in a way that he remembered and couldn't understand.

"I hope I shall see you again," she said, and her voice sounded embarrassed. "I admire your voice. You do great credit to your master."

When she said that Carl gave her hand a mighty squeeze.

Appreciation went through him like a generous wine. After all they were both artists and that meant something.

"Auf Wiedersehen!" he said, in his very male speaking voice. *"Herr Gott,* but you can play! Come, Fritz!"

The young Mozart bowed stiffly to the strangers, staring with his large and apparently innocent blue eyes.

Carl passed by Dr. Artz. He meant just to nod and go on. But an impulse seized him and he said: "Aren't you coming with us, Herr Doktor? They are going to talk business now."

Artz met the formidable gaze with his small steady black eyes. "For that I must stay, Herr Fügler. It is owing to my recommendation that these two ladies are here. They are London friends to whom I spoke of our mutual friend, Monsieur Marakoff."

"I know you mix up medicine with music," said Carl. "But I cannot see where the blend comes in." The hot blood went to his head. He gave Artz a definitely savage glance and went out with Fritz Rauch.

XII

"YOU two must be separated."

Marakoff had uttered that hard saying, and now Miss Vyvyan found that he meant it, and that he was a man who was accustomed to being obeyed. From the first moment of meeting him she had known that if he accepted Pauline as a pupil he would be the unquestioned arbiter of Pauline's musical fate. That of course implied her retirement from a position of authority that was very dear to her. But she had never braced herself up to face "separation" from Pauline. Now she was confronted with Marakoff's verdict, with the necessity of facing a drastic change.

Pauline was established in Madame Müller's *pension.* Miss Vyvyan had meant to go there, too, but Marakoff intervened.

"She needs independence. She has faults. One of them is dependence. An opera singer has to fight. Mademoiselle

l'Alouette must learn, and as quickly as possible, to look out for herself. She should be alone in her *pension*. There is no danger to her there. A Swiss *pension* with a lady at the head of it!" He laughed his big laugh. He laughed Miss Vyvyan away from the *pension*.

Yet Miss Vyvyan hadn't left Zurich. And it was Dr. Artz who had helped to keep her there. In him she had found an unexpected ally. Artz had found time to see a good deal of Miss Vyvyan. He had developed into a friendly man. By his friendliness, very simply, and even casually, shown, he had quickly gained her confidence. Her former creeping fear of him had left her. She had talked to him freely. She had even consulted him.

The consultation had come about—or so she supposed—out of impulse. On the day when Pauline had left her to go to the Pension Müller, Dr. Artz had unexpectedly invited Miss Vyvyan to dine with him at an Italian restaurant not far from Huguenin's, the Locanda Ticinese, and feeling very lonely that evening she had been glad to go, and there, over ravioli and other succulent dishes of Italy, which Artz devoured with almost greedy gusto, suddenly she had found herself consulting him about Marakoff's expressed desire, intention even, to separate her from Pauline.

And then Dr. Artz very seriously had advised her against leaving Zurich just yet. He had spoken to her in the strictest confidence and she had eagerly pledged her word not to repeat anything he was going to say to her. The line he had taken had been, oddly enough, exactly the best line to take with Miss Vyvyan. He had dwelt on Pauline's peculiar innocence—not on her youth. Girls of twenty in these days, he had said, usually know as much about the things it is difficult to talk of as women of forty, perhaps even more. But Pauline seemed to him to have innocence embedded in her character. That gave her a charm which it was very important to preserve because it entered into and affected her talent. She had an innocent voice, hadn't she?

Miss Vyvyan had eagerly agreed. Artz had then said that

Pauline's voice, if it retained its innocent beauty, was certain to delight the world, as the song of the lark delights the world because there is something unearthly in it. For the sake of Pauline's professional future, therefore, he thought it important that Pauline should be safeguarded as far as possible from the ugliness of the world. Would not it be wise then for Miss Vyvyan to be on hand for a few weeks longer just to see how things were shaping?

Marakoff, of course, was a man one could trust. But there were others in Zurich besides Marakoff, and some of them frequented Marakoff's studio. He had not mentioned any names. Indeed when Miss Vyvyan, who had seemed almost strangely stirred by that last remark, had asked him quickly, and with an apparently painful anxiety, whom he meant, he had refused to give any names.

Afterwards, but only then, she had been surprised in thinking over the evening. Artz had shown himself, not only different from, but actually the reverse of, the man she had supposed him to be.

The confidential nature of his talk, and still more of his manner, had impressed Miss Vyvyan strongly. After that evening she had felt intimate with Artz, had felt that they were friends. He understood her feeling for Pauline. He did not want to thrust her away from the girl for whom she had done so much and about whom she was so tenderly solicitous. Dr. Artz, she felt, gave her her due. And scarcely anyone else had done that.

And he helped her to stay on in Zurich. She left the Italian restaurant quite resolved not to leave Pauline alone in Zurich at present. She left it, too, feeling that she was on terms of intimacy with Dr. Artz.

And yet he had troubled her again. It seemed impossible for him to have any intercourse with her without troubling her.

Although he had refused to mention any name when he had hinted at possible danger to Pauline from those who frequented Marakoff's studio she was certain he had had Carl Fügler in his mind at that moment. The thought of Carl Fügler having

much to do with Pauline disturbed Miss Vyvyan terribly. And Artz had evidently scented a danger there.

Perhaps he knew that Carl Fügler had a bad reputation, that he was dangerous with young girls.

Miss Vyvyan felt, for the first time, a horrible jealousy of youth. Across a gulf—a gulf of which really she had never been painfully conscious before—she looked at Pauline and Carl Fügler. That gaping void separated her from them, the gaping void that lies between youth and age. Artz had an uncanny power of creating self-consciousness in her.

But he was right about Pauline. Miss Vyvyan went away from the restaurant that night quite decided to stay on in Zurich—for a time. Because of Marakoff, she dared not be very much with Pauline, but she wouldn't go right away and leave her to her own devices. That really would be wrong, as Dr. Artz had suggested. She remained in Zurich, hovering as it were at the edge of Pauline's life with a fearful eye on Marakoff.

Miss Vyvyan's activity was not merely mental and musical. Having excellent health she was a lover of outdoor games. Whenever she had the chance to play golf she played. Up at the Dolder above Zurich there was a golf course. She got hold of some clubs and went up there by train. Dr. Artz had told her about the golf at the Dolder, and had been instrumental in getting her clubs. She played round the short course alone. She went up there a second time and again played alone. Then there came an afternoon when she had not been intending to play—it was a Saturday—but was induced to play by Dr. Artz. Not that he was interested in the matter. It was only that he happened to be going in his Beuville two-seater to pay a visit in the country behind the Dolder, and telephoned to Miss Vyvyan at the Eden to say that if she meant to play golf he would be delighted to drive her up, and could probably fetch her back on his return to town.

This friendly suggestion made Miss Vyvyan change her mind. She decided to play and was driven to the Dolder and left there at four o'clock by Artz.

She was expecting as usual to play round alone attended by a caddie, but Artz had scarcely left her before she heard the ugly sound of a motor bicycle and Carl Fügler rode up, his golf clubs strapped on his broad athletic back, glowing with health and expectation and browner than ever from repeated sunbaths.

He was surprised at seeing Miss Vyvyan with a driver in her hand standing at the top of the hill near the first tee. He didn't know she played golf. Indeed, she quickly gathered that it had never occurred to him that she played, could play, any game at all. But, having recovered from his plainly shown astonishment, he invited Miss Vyvyan, with the most hearty good will to have a game with him and inquired about her handicap. Her announcement of fourteen evidently gave him another shock of surprise. Probably he had been expectant of thirty. His formidable hazel eyes, so terribly direct and observant in their glance, examined her with a new respect.

"Play the piano like that, a golf handicap of fourteen and that age!" The exclamation of his eyes! "Do you play to your handicap?" he said.

"On this course I play a little below it," said Miss Vyvyan. "It's such a short course, isn't it?"

"Yes. I long for a course like that at Samaden. I'm best with my wooden clubs. I drive a long ball. I like to hit out. My handicap's four. And so you play golf! I come here regularly on Saturday afternoons about four and play with the pro to keep my eye in. Let's see—what must I give you?"

He was still examining her with those summing-up hazel eyes that showed no consciousness of himself but only consciousness of her. Miss Vyvyan was aware of her leathery skin and her wrinkles, was very much aware of her fifty years. But she had character, any amount of it, and she meant to play a good game of golf. And she did. She had never been better with her irons. Her putting was almost inspired. On the fifteenth hole she was dormy. Carl had a shock. This extraordinary little mannish Englishwoman beat him! He pulled himself together, won the next three holes and squared the match.

"I thought you were going to beat me!" he said, ruffling up his auburn hair from his bumpy bronzed forehead with a broad, strong hand.

"I wanted to," said Miss Vyvyan. There was such a vehement sound in her voice that Carl was startled.

"Shall we play another hole?" he said.

They played it and halved the hole. "Another?" he said.

She was just going to answer yes when she saw Artz's motor stopped at the summit of the hill.

"Oh, there's Dr. Artz." she said. "He's come for me. Perhaps I'd better stop now."

"Artz!" said Carl. And his whole face changed, hardened. "Did you come up with him?"

"Yes, he brought me and promised to take me back."

"Oh! Then we'll leave it all square."

"Perhaps," she said, with a mixture of hesitation and eagerness, "we might have a deciding match some other day."

"Certainly, with pleasure. Saturday is my usual day for golf, about four o'clock. I think I'll play a few more holes by myself."

She felt that he didn't want to go up to the clubhouse with her because of Dr. Artz. He held out a big hand, that looked practical and tremendously masculine, but not specially artistic. As she put her thin long-fingered pianist's hand into it and received its grip she was moved to say:

"Do you dislike Dr. Artz?"

"Do you like him?"

She meant to say yes, but somehow in front of his searching young eyes she couldn't.

"I find him a very interesting man. He's very nice with me."

"Dr. Artz—*nice!*"

"I mean that he is pleasant and cordial with me, and seems to be genuinely friendly."

"If I were you I should not trust Artz's friendliness too much," said Carl Fügler.

And then they parted. Miss Vyvyan went up the hill with her caddie, and Carl went off to the second tee.

When she was driving down from the Dolder with Dr. Artz he said, "So you had a game with young Fügler!"

"Yes," said Miss Vyvyan, with less than her habitual naturalness, indeed with a touch of embarrassment. "He came up just when I was starting and suggested that we should play together."

"A capital idea! Fügler is a fine young fellow, well thought of in Zurich. I scarcely know him, but of course I know all about him—from Marakoff and others. He has talent and energy. He is very versatile, too. In the right hands he should come to something."

Miss Vyvyan could not help contrasting Dr. Artz's generous praise with Carl Fügler's critical distrust.

"The right hands?" she said.

"Fügler, I believe is very hot-blooded. He is very susceptible where women are concerned, I should say. If he got into the hands of a clever woman, artistic, perhaps rather older than himself, he would develop surprisingly. He has ideas, a mind. But girls—well, you know what modern girls are. They would be no use to Fügler. It's all very well to talk about nature. Nature sometimes seems to me to have been devised, to have come about, if you like to put it so, for the chastisement of man. People would say it is *natural* for, say, a young man like Fügler to mate with a brainless girl with big eyes and no knowledge, probably several years younger than himself. Wouldn't they?"

"I suppose so."

"Like to like, the very young to the very young! Rubbish! Oh, what rubbish one hears talked! And people swallow it whole. Sometimes"—he turned a little towards her—"sometimes I think that old Mother Nature needs some stern correction at the hands of Science. Ah—ha!"

The last two words, separated by a perceptible pause, were a long-drawn guttural exclamation, meditative, brooding, almost sinister.

When he left her at the hotel he said to her: "If you are going to golf next Saturday I can drive you up again, if you

like. I shall have to go into the country behind the Dolder that day."

"Thank you very much. I may be going."

"Then telephone to me. But no doubt we shall meet before then."

His small eyes were fixed upon her. She remembered how once in England she had felt as if Dr. Artz were looking on her as on material. She had that sensation again now.

XIII

GOING to Switzerland may not mean very much to the average traveler. To Pauline it meant going into a new world, and a world that was very wonderful. For it meant stimulation, it meant emancipation, it meant the bright beginning of what she never doubted would be a happy career.

Pauline was not a conceited girl, but she felt that she was meant to sing, and to sing with such a voice and in such a way that people must like to hear her. And now she was going to be trained to sing in exactly the right way. Miss Vyvyan's preparation had been ardent and efficient. But now Pauline was with a man. Oh, what a difference that made to her!

She could take so much from a man happily that she could never take from any woman. Sex can help as well as hinder. Pauline was helped by sex. In Marakoff's big hands she was at first as clay in the hands of the potter. From the very beginning she was acutely conscious of his *maestria,* of his tremendous, suppressed talent, of the dramatic force bottled up in him. In her girlish, instinctive way she felt his now hidden greatness, hidden by the loss of his once noble voice, and worshiped it. He was to her as a mutilated god.

Summer Switzerland surrounded her at this time like a dream. Always this dream was with her, sometimes strongly in the dream-way, sometimes vaguely, mysteriously. But it never quite unfolded and left her. To her, who had lived in

London houses with stucco porches, folding doors and Nottingham lace curtains, Madame Müller's large airy *pension* seemed paradisal. As to her own little room, she adored it.

The upright piano was there against the white wall. Miss Vyvyan had given her a bookcase and some "Miss Anna" books to put in it; an outline of mythology, William Smith's "Smaller Classical Dictionary," a life of Adelina Patti, "Great Opera Singers of the World," Romain Rolland's "Beethoven," etc., etc. Dear, kind Miss Vyvyan!

Her little white room, unhindered sunshine, blue water, shining blue water with cries of youth and joy coming from it, the woods that she knew of, had even been in, so near, the mountains—but they not too near—flowers, her own armchair! What an amazing and beatific change!

And they were very kind to her in the *pension*. Madame Müller was cultivated, like Miss Anna, but never alarming. She wore her culture like a spring flower rather than like a breastplate of iron. And the scent of it came to Pauline agreeably. Her brother, Herr Weber, who came to the *pension* very often, with his Danish wife, to dine with his sister, was delightful, a small, dark, poetical-looking man who literally reveled, but always gently, almost tenderly, in the arts. He carved wood quite beautifully, designed, wrought and gilded picture frames and candelabra, had skilled carpenters under his direction, who made beautiful furniture, sold antiques, china, pictures, apparently knew all there was to know about the most precious binding of books, was a reader, a musician, an etcher. His wife was a beautiful, large, fair, silent woman, whom he clothed in fabrics of noble colors and looked upon with imaginative, admiring eyes.

"But she is more beautiful still unclothed!" he would sometimes say almost wistfully, as if longing to show her nude beauty to such as were worthy to appreciate it, purely, in the way of the exalted artist.

He and his wife were both friendly to, and solicitous for, Pauline, and he took a deep interest in her singing, in her progress.

All those in the *pension,* women and men, Swiss, German, English, American, Russian, were pleasant to Pauline, with but one exception. This exception was the Princess Teresco.

The princess had her own maid with her in the *pension* and a private sitting-room, to the furnishing of which she had added numerous cushions, embroideries, flower vases, photographs and pictures. She was not very much seen in the *pension.* The people there ate their meals at separate tables. There was no obligation to be intimate. Nevertheless, the princess, who was obviously restless and who had apparently seizures of talkativeness, which "took" her occasionally as fits take an epileptic, knew, however slightly, everyone in the *pension,* including Pauline.

She was considered by everyone to be "odd." She was also generally thought to be very fascinating when she chose to take trouble. She often had a careless, self-centered way with her, and obviously expected that her will must prevail. But she was liked and admired as *"une très grande dame,"* not at all the usual sort of woman one generally meets in a *pension* however superior.

This beautifully made little lady, in Paris dresses, fashioned to suit her own taste, and who was understood to be spending the summer in Zurich on account of Dr. Artz, was the only person in Madame Müller's *pension* who was ever unkind to Pauline. The first time Pauline had seen the princess she had felt, though rather vaguely, that the light restless eyes had examined her critically, not with any softness of an old, or middle-aged, person looking benignly at a young and well meaning girl.

The princess didn't like her, perhaps even disliked her. And yet, there were moments when she seemed interested, even profoundly interested in Pauline; not in her singing, never in that, not in her progress, but in *her,* herself. There were even moments when Pauline felt as if the princess, in spite of the dislike, was much more really interested in her than was anyone else in the *pension.*

It happened that Pauline was the only young girl there.

Among the rest there was no woman under thirty, though there were three young men, a German-Swiss, a Swede, and an American, who were studying, the first of the three at the Polytechnic, the other two at the University of Zurich.

One evening after the *pension* dinner, when Pauline had just gone to her bedroom to study one of the Miss Anna books, and was sitting seriously by the open window reading in the classical dictionary about the labors of Hercules, she heard a tap on her door. She called out *"Herein!"* The door was opened and the Italian maid of the princess, an elderly Neapolitan woman, appeared, and said,

"Madame la princesse invite mademoiselle de venir prendre le café avec elle dans son salon."

Pauline was astonished. She didn't at all want to go, but she got up, put away the classical dictionary in the bookshelf, and followed the maid to the princess's room. She hadn't the *savoir-faire* to do anything else.

She found the princess dressed in a long white silk robe, very loose and expensive, though apparently very simple, lying on a large sofa which she had recently added to Madame Müller's furniture, with a paper-covered French book in her hand. Her yellow-white hair was crisply fluffed out all over her little head. Her cheeks and lips were delicately and cleverly tinted with rose-color. From beneath her straw-colored eyebrows her curiously restless eyes examined Pauline maliciously as the girl walked into the room. But she smiled and held out a hand gleaming with diamond and emerald rings.

"Benvenuta! I felt lonely. I thought we might have coffee together. Do sit down—by me. Will you have a cigarette?"

Pauline said she never smoked. She hadn't acquired the habit and didn't wish to because of her voice.

"Oh, to be sure, the voice—the precious voice! *Portate il caffè, Maria! Subito!"* she called rather harshly to the maid who had gone into the adjoining room.

"Vèngo!" came in a peacock cry from the servant.

The princess put her book down and cast a furtive glance at Pauline, furtive yet very observant and searching.

"How old are you, Miss Iselle?" The question was abrupt, seemed to hit Pauline like a thrown pebble.

"I shall be twenty-one on my next birthday."

"You manage to seem very young, younger than that." The stress on the "manage" was marked. Another question followed the first. "How old would you take me to be? Maria! *Portate il caffè!*"

"Vèngo!"

And the maid, looking worried, came in with two cups of black coffee on a beautiful silver tray, certainly unconnected with the *pension.*

"Here is your cup, Miss Iselle, and I shall smoke. I have no singing voice, you see, so it doesn't matter. Well? You haven't told me."

"But, madame, I don't know. How could I? I have no idea."

"What are you blushing for? Of course it looks very nice and all that. But why?"

"I didn't know I was."

"Some people—girls—can blush whenever they want to. Well, how old would you take me to be?"

"Not at all old."

"Of course I'm not old."

"I think, madame, you look younger tonight than I have ever seen you look before," said Pauline, and that was true. The girl had suddenly been struck by a new appearance of almost—not quite—youthfulness in this extraordinary person.

"Ah! You really think that? That has struck you?"

"Yes."

"I'm not old at all." The voice had become very decisive. There was a moment of silence. Apparently the princess had forgotten her curious question, reiterated. When she spoke again, she said,

"Is it true that Dr. Artz brought you here?"

"Dr. Artz! Do you mean to Zurich?"

"Yes, of course I do!" said the princess, impatiently. Her coffee spoon rattled in the saucer with a dry sound.

"No. I came with Miss Vyvyan."

"She's very clever, and very—she's very accomplished. One knows that from her playing. But wasn't it Dr. Artz who arranged that you should come here to be educated?"

Pauline, not knowing what she ought to do, and very uncomfortable, explained about Dr. Artz at the Meyers' house and the suggestion of Zurich. She spoke very politely, but the silver of her young eyes began to look sulky. How different women were from men! And how much she preferred men to women!

"Then it *was* Dr. Artz who got you to come here!" said the princess. She looked very grim for a moment and stared down at her spread-out white gown on the sofa, and at her pretty little ankles covered with the finest possible silk stockings. "Is your chaperon, or whatever she is, going to stay on all the summer?" she asked presently.

"Miss Vyvyan? I don't know."

"She and Dr. Artz are great friends."

"Are they?"

"Certainly they are. Didn't you know it?"

"Dr. Artz has kindly taken trouble for us," said Pauline, more and more astonished. "My master, Mr. Marakoff, is a friend of his."

"And Mr. Fügler isn't a friend. Young men don't like Dr. Artz. You are what they call young. Do *you* like Dr. Artz?"

"Yes, quite well. As far as I know him. I have seen very little of him, here," said Pauline, with a sort of sulky firmness. "He's always busy, I believe—and I have my studies."

"With Marakoff, a great artist gone to smash. He is very interested in you, too."

"He takes great pains with me. He is a wonderful master."

"And Dr. Artz is a wonderful doctor—they say. And so you think I look very young tonight?"

"When I first came in I thought so."

The princess stared, then cried out irritably, *"Maria! Portate via il caffè. Subito!"*

"Ven—go!"

And then the princess seemed to lose interest in her visitor. Her light eyes wandered about the room, and Pauline sat apparently forgotten. The Neapolitan woman came in, took the empty cups and lifted the pretty silver tray. The princess talked to her rapidly, and at length, in Italian. Pauline couldn't bear it any longer and got up uncomfortably to go.

"Good night, madame."

"Oh! Good night! You—sometime you must come again. Yes." The light excited eyes searched Pauline. As she went out of the room she heard a faster torrent of Italian.

It was almost immediately after this curious conversation that the princess seemed to want to make friends with Miss Vyvyan. She called on Miss Vyvyan at the Eden Hotel and invited her to tea in her room at the *pension*. She asked her to play during the latter visit. Miss Vyvyan, who always loved playing, sat down at once to the piano.

"Play some Chopin!" the princess said.

Miss Vyvyan played, lost count of time, and the princess sat in an armchair near to the piano staring at her, sometimes sympathetically, sometimes maliciously, sometimes with a sort of deep inquiring earnestness, sometimes with sharp inquiring satire. When at last Miss Vyvyan stopped, not at all exhausted by her efforts, and turned round to the princess, she was met with the odd remark,

"No wonder Dr. Artz is interested in *you*."

The accent was like a blow. Miss Vyvyan was startled. "I don't understand," she said.

"Come to my room. I feel like talking today. Some days I want silence, but not today. You have stirred me up. But who is it stirs *you* up?"

"Who? Nobody. It's simply that I have a certain gift for—"

"Oh no! It can't be only that. Music like that must come from a particular, not from a general source. No, you'll never make me believe that. But come to my room. I'll show you the way."

She hurried out of the "conversation" room and almost ran

down the passage, followed by Miss Vyvyan. When they were in her sitting-room with the door shut the princess, who seemed to have been really excited by the music, again referred to Dr. Artz's inevitable interest in Miss Vyvyan.

"Of course it must have been so. He heard you play in England?"

"Yes, several times."

"Exactly. And then he knew. But he would know of course. It could not be otherwise."

"I really don't understand," said Miss Vyvyan, with rather unusual reserve. Her wrinkled little face screwed itself up and she sat stiffly in her chair, looking defensive.

"Then you don't understand Dr. Artz." (A pause.) "Do you understand him?"

"I really don't know."

"Well, I do understand him. But I'll test you."

"That's all very well," said Miss Vyvyan, "but you haven't asked me whether I wish to be tested or not. It's very kind of you to invite me here, and I'm very glad if you like my playing. But—"

"Oh, it won't hurt you," the princess interrupted, smiling. "You needn't be afraid of me. To women I am perfectly harmless, because they don't interest me as a rule. I don't care for them. But you are not ordinary. You have managed to remain interesting at an age when—but that doesn't matter. You are remarkable, at any rate in music. Perhaps also in life?"

"There's nothing at all remarkable in my life."

"But you wish there was!"

"You choose to say so. I didn't say so."

"I know it. Your playing has told it to me."

"You are confounding a personality with a gift, I think."

"Oh no, I'm not. But we've got away from that test. How we women always get away from the point! Tell me one thing, if you don't mind. And I'm sure you won't. Why did Dr. Artz want Miss Pauline Iselle to make her musical studies here, in Zurich?"

Miss Vyvyan's small face was a study in startled surprise. For an instant she didn't say anything. Then she said, making a fairly obvious effort to recover herself, "I don't know."

"In that case," said the princess with a sort of malignant relish, "you must forgive me for saying that you don't know Dr. Artz."

"But who says that Dr. Artz did wish Pauline to study here?"

"Miss Iselle told me that. I asked her in here to coffee the other night after dinner, and she explained the situation to me."

Miss Vyvyan got up. She was beginning to feel very angry. She had a temper as well as a temperament. She was also endowed with a fighting spirit. And she had a well bred woman's knowledge of what may be said and what simply must not.

"I don't quite know what you mean by 'the situation,' princess," she said, very quietly but with a certain dignity which was perfectly simple and natural, and therefore thoroughly effective. "Or what Pauline has told you. I don't quite see why she should tell you anything, or indeed what there is to tell. Dr. Artz knew I was looking for someone to train Pauline for the opera stage, and spoke of Marakoff to me. She could not do better anywhere else. Since I've been here I've convinced myself that he's an excellent teacher."

"So you think Dr. Artz arranged it for Marakoff's benefit! That's really quite funny!" And the princess uttered a sort of shadowy laugh, slight but somehow full of a puerile irony.

"Please don't let us talk about it any more. It isn't interesting. It's a matter really that only concerns us, Pauline and myself."

"And Mr. Leon Meyer—doesn't it?"

"Mr. Meyer!" Again Miss Vyvyan screwed up her face and looked startled. "Why do you—"

"Miss Iselle told me that it was at Mr. Leon Meyer's house that Dr. Artz mentioned Marakoff as a possible teacher."

"D'you know Mr. Leon Meyer?"

The princess laughed again, this time very unpleasantly. "I've known 'Mr. Leon' ever since I can remember. When will he be coming here?"

"He's never said anything about coming. I've no reason to suppose—"

"Well then, why should he engage a suite of rooms at the Baur-au-Lac?"

"Has he?"

"Yes, for the whole of September. Didn't you know it?"

"It never occurred to me to go and ask questions in a hotel about Mr. Meyer. Now I must really go. Thank you for inviting me. Good-by."

"I love your playing." The princess held Miss Vyvyan's hand rather closely. "You are remarkable. You mustn't be angry because I am interested in you."

"Of course I'm not angry."

"One has to be interested in interesting people. Good-by. On Saturday I'll come up and see you play golf."

This time Miss Vyvyan not only looked surprised. A slow red pushed its way through her maze of wrinkles, a slow and painful red. But she only again said good-by, and at once left the room.

It chanced that as she came out into the passage she caught sight of Pauline, with a portfolio of music, in the distance, evidently going to her room. She had a hat on and had probably just returned from a lesson. Miss Vyvyan hurried after her.

"Pauline! Pauline dear!"

Pauline turned round gently, with a sort of tranquillity that astonished Miss Vyvyan. How fresh she looked in the shadowy passage! How young! And full of a sort of quiet and simple carelessness! After the princess!

"Pauline dear!" Miss Vyvyan kissed her affectionately. "How nice to have caught you! Let me come into your room for a moment."

"Yes, do." The girl opened the door, and the little white room welcomed them.

"It's a dear little room, really!" said Miss Vyvyan.

"Yes, isn't it? I quite love it."

"All your books! Do you read them?"

"I've read Beethoven's life, and the whole of Adelina Patti. How wonderful she was!"

"Yes, and so must you be. Have you been to a lesson?"

"Yes. What d'you think? Today I've been singing in a duet."

"A duet! But Marakoff hasn't his voice any more."

"No, not with him. He made me sing the duet in 'Traviata' with young Mr. Fügler."

"With Carl Fügler?"

"Yes. He took the part of the father. It was wonderful singing with him. It seemed to increase my voice. I had to sing out and I was able to. Mr. Marakoff says he is going to make us sing together a good deal."

"There isn't very much music for soprano and baritone."

"He says there is quite a good deal, taking the whole of opera. There's—"

"Oh yes! I dare say there is some. But still—I should have thought it would be much better for you to sing with a tenor."

"But Mr. Marakoff hasn't a good tenor pupil at present."

"That's a pity, a great pity. Your voice would blend much better with a tenor than with a baritone. I wonder—I hope Marakoff knows what he is doing."

"Oh, he's a magnificent master!" exclaimed Pauline, almost with fire. "He inspires me!" Her gray eyes shone with a light Miss Vyvyan had never seen in them before.

After a moment Miss Vyvyan said: "Why did you tell Princess Teresco about that day at the Meyers'?"

Pauline looked up quickly. "Have you been with her?"

"Yes. And she spoke about it."

"She made me tell her. She asked questions till I had to."

"What questions did she ask?"

"All sorts of questions. She asked how old I was, and how old did I think she was, and whether I really thought she was looking younger—"

"Younger?"

"Yes. I thought she looked younger than usual when I came in, and I said so—when she asked me how old I thought she was."

"You thought she was looking unusually young?"

"Yes. And then she wanted to know whether Dr. Artz had brought me here, whether he arranged for me to be educated here. I didn't know what to do. And afterwards she began to ask about you."

"Me!"

"Yes. She wanted to know whether you were going to spend the whole summer here. She said you and Dr. Artz were great friends and asked me whether I knew it."

"Really! What impertinence!"

"I thought so, too. But all the people here say the princess is a great lady."

"Then she's a great lady who doesn't know how to behave!"

"That's what I thought. And then she asked me whether I liked Dr. Artz."

"What did you say?"

"I said I didn't mind him. He was very busy and I scarcely saw anything of him. I had my studies."

"Quite right. You couldn't have given a better answer. I see now. She forced it all out of you."

"And she has been talking about it to you?"

"Yes. If I were you, Pauline, I shouldn't have very much to do with the princess."

"I don't want to. There's something very odd about her."

"Yes." Miss Vyvyan sat for a moment in silence, looking troubled, unhappy, unusually ugly and old. At last she said: "The princess usually asks questions. But she told me something today. Mr. Meyer is coming here."

"Is he?"

"You didn't know it, did you?"

"Of course not! When is he coming?"

"In September."

"Oh."

Miss Vyvyan was watching Pauline with a sort of nervous closeness which seemed very much out of character in her. Usually she was the least watchful of women, absorbed in what she was talking about or doing.

"Will you be glad to see him?"

"Mr. Meyer is very kind. He has been wonderfully kind to me. When I think of all this—" She looked round the room and out of the window. "And I owe it all to him. If it weren't for him—"

"I know! I know!" Miss Vyvyan suddenly returned to her natural impulsiveness. "Oh, Pauline!" she exclaimed. "If only I had more money! I wouldn't have brought you here. I'd have taken you to Milan."

"Dear Miss Vyvyan! But I should hate not to be here."

"Why?" said Miss Vyvyan, with sudden sharpness.

"Why?" Pauline began to blush. "Because I like being here. I like my room, and Zurich."

"Yes?"

"And I—I love being taught by Mr. Marakoff."

Miss Vyvyan got up. She looked agitated. Her wrinkles were working. "There are others who could teach you quite as well as Marakoff, perhaps better. Though I don't wish to say one word against him. But—but there are tenors at Milan with whom you could have sung. Milan is a great place for tenors. Well, dear, I must be going." She kissed Pauline's young forehead. "Anyhow I'm glad you are happy. I want you to be happy."

But alone on the staircase, as she went down, she was saying to herself: "Was that true? Do I? Do I?"

XIV

MORE and more Miss Vyvyan began to wonder about Dr. Artz. She had already passed through contradictory phases of feeling about him. And now, after the two interviews in

the *pension,* with the princess and, later, with Pauline, there came still another phase. It was a phase of confusion, which might be expressed by the well-worn phrase that Miss Vyvyan "didn't know what to think" about Dr. Artz.

It seemed to her then that Dr. Artz meant too much, meant more than he ought to mean to those with whom he came into contact. He affected those about him in a manner, and to an extent, that was unreasonable, a manner that they might very well resent.

Herself, Mr. Meyer, Miss Anna, Princess Teresco, Carl Fügler—they were all influenced by this ugly, odd-shaped, clever, observant, pertinacious man. Carl Fügler detested him. But Artz had spoken well of Fügler, had said that Fügler was versatile, talented, a fine young fellow. That was a good deal to say of a young man who disliked him actively, and had shown it. Artz must be capable of considerable generosity. And, besides, Artz had seemed to smile benignly on her, Miss Vyvyan's, friendship with the young fellow. Twice since that first game of golf, on two successive Saturdays. Dr. Artz had driven her up to the Dolder in his motor and had returned a couple of hours or so later to take her back to town. He was certainly capable of kindness.

He had spoken to her in his car on the hill, as they descended to Zurich, of the rubbish that was talked about mating youth with youth. Apparently he wanted keenly age to have a greater chance than most people are prepared to give it. She had been tremendously impressed by his remark about old Mother Nature needing stern correction at the hands of Science. (Perhaps he was desirous of giving that needed stern correction. But—exactly how?)

He had not discussed his experiments with her since she had been in Zurich.

Miss Anna, she thought, had cherished a sort of anger against Artz. She had not expressed it, but her whole manner during, and after, the cocktail business in Carlton House Terrace had seemed to indicate it. There had been suspicion in it, dread almost, and the sarcasm had not rung true. It had

been like an attempt to throw off something that had nothing to do with sarcasm. This came to Miss Vyvyan now with a strange clearness. And the old Jewess was not a woman who was very susceptible to influence. She was as one in a watch-tower keenly, with immense worldly knowledge and sarcasm, surveying those who passed by, and remaining always peculiarly herself. But Dr. Artz had affected her.

Mr. Leon! The faded and weary Jew with the vital eyes had fastened on Artz as a desperate man fastens on hope. If Miss Anna saw Artz with a secret fear her brother saw him with a secret and powerful hope. And now Mr. Meyer was coming to Zurich.

And Princess Teresco? She, too—it was obvious—was extremely interested in Artz, perhaps even painfully interested.

For a moment Miss Vyvyan, shutting her eyes, seemed to see Dr. Artz as something vast and unnatural impending over the city of Zurich. The influence of Dr. Artz had something of the apparently abnormal in it.

Except upon Pauline?

It seemed that Pauline was not much affected by Dr. Artz, was perhaps not at all affected by him. Evidently Dr. Artz didn't mean much to Pauline—the youngest among them. Apparently, also, Pauline didn't mean very much to Dr. Artz. And yet surely Princess Teresco thought otherwise. And she was not a stupid woman. Malicious people are always shrewd. Could it be that Dr. Artz was playing a part in regard to Pauline?

Pauline was playing no part. Miss Vyvyan knew that with painful certainty. Pauline's interest lay far from Dr. Artz. Quite probably she thought of him as an almost old man, though he wasn't old. But girls of Pauline's age are apt to think of every man over thirty-five as at the least "elderly," and Pauline wasn't one of those peculiar young girls, sometimes met with, who are attracted by age in men.

But Artz had married three women, all young, all good-looking. He was certainly attracted by the beauty of youth. He might be playing a part with Pauline. Suddenly Miss

Vyvyan realized that Artz had pushed her towards young Carl Fügler. The fact came upon her, she felt, with the swiftness of light. Yes! What she had looked upon as good nature had been a plan. The first suggestion of golf on a Saturday had been part of a plan. Artz must have known that Carl Fügler had the habit of playing golf on Saturday afternoons.

For a moment Miss Vyvyan had a queer thrill of something like feminine vanity, very personal, wholly unusual in her.

Did Artz then think, could he think that she had the power to attract such a splendid young man as Carl Fügler?

Miss Vyvyan began to feel painfully excited. The process of thought was drowned in her by another process—of feeling. It was as if she stood back and looked at herself, the self that had talent, and energy, and temperament, and ardor, and charity, a dominating temper, too, and a power of getting things through. Contemplating it in this odd new way, she knew that it had the capacity to make an impression.

And then she thought of her body, her withered thinness, her dried-up saplessness, her age, her leathery skin, her maze of wrinkles, her little monkey face.

And it was in that moment, horrible, almost despairing, that she remembered Dr. Artz's assertion, or implication, that he knew how to renew the powers of the body, meaning by that mainly the ability to love and, or to attract, perhaps compel, love. The inability to love and the ability to love. He had told her brutally almost what he meant exactly by that. She had been almost disgusted long ago—it seemed now to her long ago—by his materialistic conception of life. But now something in her ached with longing for a merely physical renewal. Fügler, Pauline—they held life in their hands, like a perfect globe of crystal gleaming with wonderful lights. They had the whole. And what had she, Naomi Vyvyan, with her withered frame and her wrinkled monkey face?

If only Artz could do something for her!

That afternoon visit to the princess marked a turning point in Miss Vyvyan's life at Zurich. She found herself trusting the princess's knowledge, or intuition, whichever it was, and

so, of necessity, reverting to her original view of Artz as a possible danger to Pauline. But she was no longer able to content herself with the protective feelings of the watch-dog, of the chaperon *in situ* and natural protectress of youth. A complication had arisen. There was a splendid young man in Zurich who played golf, who even played golf with her.

A conflict arose in her now. It was a conflict between the chaperon-woman and a woman who detested the thought of being a chaperon. It was a conflict between the Naomi Vyvyan who had been before she had met Dr. Artz, and the Naomi Vyvyan who had undergone Dr. Artz's disturbing influence.

Miss Vyvyan was rent.

But she made up her mind that she would keep secret the fact that she was rent. No one must know. When she looked at herself in the glass she felt that if the conflict within her was known, or even suspected, she would be humiliated to the dust.

Carl Fügel was not at all an ordinary young man. He was, sometimes almost savagely, original, in all moments under all circumstances himself, free from echoes of the voices from other natures and minds. His manners were often brusk. His decisiveness deceived many people into thinking him hard. The second rate never won a compliment from him. But he seldom overlooked anything first rate. Unlike many young men he could be interested, even fascinated, by anyone who really was interesting, by a moldy old man, a deplorable-looking youth with no sporting instincts, even—and this was strangest of all—by an ugly, elderly woman.

"Give me something!" That was Carl Fügler's perpetual demand made upon the minds that he came in contact with. "Increase my knowledge! Increase my powers of feeling! Feed me! Don't leave me exactly as I am! Add to the sum of me!"

Directly he heard Miss Vyvyan play, directly he heard her talk and had a conversation with her, he knew her for an interesting and talented being. She wasn't a beauty, and of course she was quite an old woman—in his view. But she was worth something. She had a lot in her. She had something to

give. She never talked stupidly and she listened intensely to Carl when he talked at large, as he loved to do.

Those two sinned against the light, for they talked when they were playing the great game of golf.

Carl Fügler's interest in her interestingness was dangerous to Miss Vyvyan.

It was after Miss Vyvyan felt that she didn't know what to think of Dr. Artz that she had a conversation with him one evening. He came to her hotel unexpectedly when she had just finished her dinner, and was about to go up to her bedroom to continue the reading of a book by Paul Bourget. He told her that he had been dining at the *pension* with Princess Teresco.

"She spoke very warmly of you," he said, speaking slowly with his guttural voice.

"Did she?" said Miss Vyvyan.

They sat down in a room near the entrance and, after asking her permission, Artz lighted a very black cigar.

"Did you see Pauline?" Miss Vyvyan asked.

"Yes, at her table. I spoke to her for a minute. How is she getting on with her singing?"

His voice did not sound very interested. It occurred to Miss Vyvyan that if he had wanted to he could have stayed on in the *pension* and had a talk with Pauline instead of coming to the Eden to her. Perhaps the princess was wrong.

"She's getting on very well. Marakoff seems to inspire her. At least that's the word she uses, dear child, to describe his influence on her. I believe in Pauline. I always have. She may not seem exactly interesting, and she is very childish sometimes for her age, but she has music in her. The gift is there."

"You are a generous woman."

"Generous? Why d'you say that? Naturally I am very much interested in Pauline."

"Nevertheless, you are a generous woman." He smoked for a moment in silence. His ugly face was very grave. His figure protruded oddly as he sat back in the wicker armchair with his short legs stretched out, one foot over the other. "It is

sometimes extremely difficult to be generous and fair to the young," he went on. "Often it needs an effort."

"I suppose we are nearly always making efforts, of some kind," she said.

He smiled. "And sometimes they do not lead to much. Ha! The important thing is always to attempt only the possible," he added.

"Sometimes it's difficult to know—" she began, and stopped.

Since Dr. Artz had arrived she had been full of her desire, that desire which was mingled with distrust. It had risen in her with the sight of him. It was clamoring now.

Two old ladies came into the lounge. They were English and looked attentive. They sat down close to Miss Vyvyan and Artz.

"Shall we take a stroll by the lake?" said Artz. "This cigar of mine is rather strong for indoors."

"Yes, I should like it." They got up. "I'll go and get a hat and be down in a moment."

"A hat? What do you need a hat for on such a fine night? Besides, you have such beautiful hair!"

"Really—have I?" she said, quite startled, and feeling as if her face had become red.

"But of course you know it. All women know their good points."

"I have always had thick hair, and it doesn't turn gray."

"Why should it? Your nature will never turn gray either."

She didn't go upstairs for her hat, but as she and Dr. Artz strolled on, with their backs towards the lit-up city, from which, but a long way off, the faint music of a band came to them, she saw a good many people staring at her, and could not help feeling that even the beauty of her thick brown hair, so appreciatively mentioned by her companion, could not save the situation her age and her weather-beaten appearance created.

"I'm too old to go about like this," something said painfully within her. "Much too old."

Dr. Artz seemed quite unaware that there was anything

out of the ordinary in the fact of her uncovered head. He uncovered his own, and, holding his imitation Panama hat in his hand, walked on slowly discoursing, while she greedily listened. He had always the power to hold her attentive. She felt that he knew so much that was strange and that she didn't know. Tonight he was talking about the occult causes of disease and the teaching of Bombastus von Hohenheim, known to the world as Paracelsus. Evidently Artz had a curious sympathy with the great sixteenth-century physician who despised mere scholarship and held the discussions of the schools in contempt.

"He went to nature," said Artz. "He learned as the animals learn."

"But," she couldn't help interposing, "don't you want to correct nature?"

In the evening shadows of the close-set trees he cast a strange look upon her. "I!" he said.

"When you spoke to me the other day about Mother Nature perhaps needing correction at the hands of Science, I thought you meant at your hands."

"You have a good memory," he said, after a pause. "You are a clever woman, much too clever to be wasted." He laid a heavy stress on the final word and his small black eyes were still fixed upon her.

There was an empty bench near them on a curving promontory sticking a little way out into the darkening waters of the lake. "Let us sit down here for a moment," he said.

They sat down. He laid his hat on the seat beside him. She thought she had never before seen him look so like the Beethoven photograph, rugged, peculiar, but almost—in her view—attractive, because so obviously a man of brains, of assured intellect.

"Paracelsus was laughed at and condemned by the medical fools of his day," Dr. Artz continued. "But he succeeded in doing things. That is the test. He did things that those who jeered at him could not do. He was hated by the doctors of Basel as I am hated by the doctors of Zurich. These cities

are not very far away from each other, are they? Paracelsus and I are divided from each other by nearly four hundred years; but human nature has not changed. I spit on the medical fools!"

He said the last words with concentrated venom. Miss Vyvyan looked at him in the following silence with intense curiosity, not unmingled with fear. He was now looking straight before him, at the dark and still waters of the lake sinking as it were gradually into the arms of the night.

"For I, too, can do things which they cannot do, or dare not do. There are so many human beings who are companioned all their lives by fear. How lives could be altered, made glorious, if there were no fears gnawing at the roots of them!"

Again she saw his small penetrating eyes glance at her and her desire grew strong within her. She wondered if he knew of it. If he did he made no allusion to it, gave her nothing of any occult knowledge connected with her. He went on talking of Paracelsus, showing what seemed to her a minute acquaintance with his teachings. He told her that when a man thinks, he begets an etheric shape, and that the glandular system is the visible expression of the etheric body. He spoke at length about the glandular system, and passed on to the danger that lies in creating such thought-forms as close themselves against any new aspect of liife.

"That," he said to her, "is what the medical fools do. Their doors are close-shut and barred against any new aspect which tries to find entrance. What about *your* doors?"

"Mine?" she said, startled.

"Yes. Are they open or shut?"

"I—don't know." She screwed up her face. She was trying to think deeply, to examine herself. "I'm not sure. It's so difficult to—one gets into habits and then—"

"If they are shut, open them." It sounded to her like a command. "A bad habit can be changed, abandoned. And *you* are not a doctor."

"Why d'you say that?"

"Because the average doctor lives enclosed in a thick shell

of habit and prejudice that nothing can penetrate, and the everlasting murmur that never ceases in that shell is 'It can't be! It can't be!' Damn the fools! No wonder they hate me."

She thought of Carl Fügler. He wasn't a doctor.

"And the young men of Zurich they hate me too," said Artz. Again he had evidently read her thought.

"Do they?" she said, attempting insincerity.

"Don't you know it?"

"But I know none of them. Young men don't notice a woman like me."

Instead of immediately commenting on that statement Artz said: "Do you know what metabolism means?"

"Some sort of—of change?" she said, rather doubtfully.

"Chemical change in a living cell. Paracelsus affirmed that there can be a process of metabolism in the soul. Just now you made a statement. You said that a woman like yourself—meaning yourself—isn't noticed by young men. That remark came out of a thought-habit. You have, perhaps often subconsciously, made a habit of thinking that you are incapable of making young men take notice of you. You have been adding, daily perhaps, mud to the stream and so diminishing the clearness of the water. You have been absolutely creating in the young men whom you may chance to meet an impotence to take notice of you. Why do that? What is the good of it? Encourage metabolism in the living cells of your soul. You notice young men."

Miss Vyvyan felt that she reddened in the darkness. "I don't think I do—not much—not as a rule," she said hastily.

"Then you are not aware that they hate me here in Zurich?"

"Why is that—if they do?"

"It is a simple enough matter. They know I am trying to make age different from what it is. They know I am trying to give back to age powers which youth has and enjoys—terribly—and which age has lost. This rouses all the jealousy of youth. A great deal of the joy of youth comes from seeing the misery of age. Did not you know that?"

"I—I don't believe I ever thought about it till now."

"Is it not so?"

"It's a horrid idea," she said slowly.

"Say rather that it is a horrid fact. Young men hate me, Carl Fügler hates me, because I am fighting on the side of age. There are the two contrasts. Youth looks at age and rejoices. Age looks at youth and despairs. It is not youth but age which would like to abolish those contrasts. And sex is at the bottom of it all, sex with its sexual jealousies, keen as the sharpest knives. Young men rejoicing in their virility hate the man who claims to be able to give back virility to those who have lost it. If everyone has a thing the value of that thing is diminished. But if *you* have a thing and *I* lack it—what then? Ah—ha!"

His voice seemed to her to take on a sardonic heaviness in that slow exclamation. She felt herself shudder.

"But," he added, "youth must put up with me and with what I do. The hatred of all these young men does not bother me at all. I go ahead careless of all their hatred. They cannot help it, any more than you can help being woman and I man."

It was rapidly getting darker. They were out of hearing now of the distant music in Zurich, but Miss Vyvyan heard from time to time the splash of oars in the water, the sound of voices coming from boats, either hidden from her, or seen by her only as shadows. The sound of those voices seemed always young in her ears. It is young people who like to be out in the summer darkness, separated from those eyes which never cease from spying on land.

Questions about Artz rose in her mind. She longed to give utterance to them. Was he an enthusiast? It seemed so. And yet she thought that he sometimes looked sinister. Was he a pure devotee of science? Was he an altruist? She couldn't believe it. She thought of Leon Meyer and of Amber Braybridge's remark about his being a good patient for Artz. Was Artz a man full of avarice? She didn't know how rich he was. But since she had been in Zurich she had heard him talked

of as a man who needed plenty of money for the life he lived. And those two divorced women? Perhaps he had to give money to them. Wives can't always be thrown off without some kind of payment.

"No, I suppose they can't," she found herself saying vaguely.

"But there are things that can be helped. You might learn to give up oppressing your strong personality with conventional abstractions."

"You think me conventional?" she said, with most genuine astonishment.

"Well, you were even afraid tonight to come out without covering your head with a hat."

"I thought I was rather old for—" she began hurriedly, and stopped.

"There you are with your habitual age-thoughts, creating etheric shapes which are no good to you! Do you create similar shapes when you are up on the Dolder playing golf?"

"I—don't know."

He leaned over a little towards her. "Why not trust yourself to me?" he said, in the slow and guttural voice.

XV

A SENSATION of almost violent repulsion came to Miss Vyvyan at that moment, an intense shrinking, partially physical, which made her want to get away from Dr. Artz. Both body and mind were full of refusal. And it was all quite instinctive. There was no reasoning in her. Perhaps she would, of course in inoffensive words, have given voice to this refusal, but at that moment she saw in the dark distance of the lake the slowly moving doubled light, red and green, of a Chinese lantern, fastened to the prow of a gliding boat and reflected in the water. And with the doubled light there voyaged a dual sound, of two distant voices singing. One following the other, then one joined with the other.

These voices, strangely, prevented her from making any reply to Dr. Artz's question. The sound of them switched her off from events on shore, drew her attention, irresistibly, to the water. And it seemed that Dr. Artz followed her into that darkness towards the gliding red and green light which was slowly, very slowly, drawing nearer to the bank where they were sitting. For, breaking her silence, he said:

"They are singing Boito. But what sacrilege! Putting a baritone voice in the place of a contralto!"

"I thought there was—of course it's *'La luna immobile'* from 'Mefistofele.'"

"Travestied!"

"Yes; but what a lovely, classically pure thing it is! And really it sounds marvelous out there on the water."

She listened with greedy attention, leaning forward and gazing at the light from the lantern. The voices ceased. There was a very long pause. For a moment she feared there would be no more singing. Then, much nearer now, the soprano voice rose again in the night, clear, crystalline, almost cold in its purity.

"Why—but—but it's—isn't it Pauline? Yes, it's Pauline!" She looked at Artz. He was smiling. "You knew it was Pauline?"

"Directly I heard it."

The baritone voice followed, taking the contralto's section of the duet.

"But then that's Carl Fügler! Carl Fügler and Pauline out there at this time of night!"

"It is not very late. The night is only beginning."

Miss Vyvyan said nothing. Now the two voices were blended together, were married in music. Pauline had on that first day in Zurich longed to sing on the water. Now she was singing on the water. It was night and she was singing. She was doing what she had longed to do—with Carl Fügler.

"La luna immobile inonda l'etere d'un raggio pallido . . ." to the end: *"L'aura è serena, la luna è piena, canta, sirena, canta, sirena, la serenata!"*

"It should be a contralto, of course," said Dr. Artz. "But all the same they make it sound well, don't they?"

He spoke calmly, critically, like a musical man attending to a performance of music. Miss Vyvyan did not reply to this question. She couldn't speak at that moment. She was too angry. She was swept by a heat of anger. Pauline out at night in the middle of the lake alone with Carl Fügler! What was it Dr. Artz had told her about young Fügler? She remembered well, too well: his blood was hot; he was very susceptible to women.

Disgraceful that those two should be out there together in the darkness! Pauline should have known better. And she had always looked so innocent. Miss Vyvyan had spoken of her as still almost a child. And all the time—

How horribly deceitful people were! One believed in them and all the time one was being taken in! They were living underhand lives. They were secretly laughing at those who believed in them.

Carl Fügler too!

Miss Vyvyan thought of those games of golf on the height of the Dolder and felt that young Fügler had been playing a part with her when he had been so friendly, had seemed so interested in her. And now—she had been badly treated, abominably treated by them both. And she had done so much for Pauline, had slaved, planned, touted, gone down on her knees almost to Miriam and afterwards to Leon Meyer for her.

Meyer! He was coming to Zurich. Why?

"They are coming this way," said Dr. Artz, still in the calm, nocturnal voice, a voice that the singing seemed to have soothed, tranquillized. "I can hear the sound of the oars now."

The duet had died away. Pauline began singing, "Hark, hark, the lark!"

Miss Vyvyan shivered with emotion. The lark, her lark, discovered by her, let loose, as it were, into the blue by her out of captivity, the captivity of a horribly bourgeois existence! She heard her lark singing—but at night!

She got up from the bench.

"What's the matter? You are not going? How sweetly she sings. Really her voice is beautiful, and it seems to have gained in strength. She is improving in Marakoff's hands. Shall we call to them? Shall we give them a surprise?"

"No!" She put a hand on his big arm. "No, don't! I don't want them. I don't feel—I haven't any hat on."

"The hat again!"

"I don't choose to be seen by them without my hat!" she said vehemently.

She didn't say that also she didn't choose to be seen by them just then with Dr. Artz, and in her present condition of emotion. She and Dr. Artz, the pair of them, hatless, confronting those young singing creatures! No, no!

"I never supposed that you were self-conscious!" he said, with apparently genuine surprise, following her along the path under the trees.

"I'm not self-conscious." Her manner was extraordinarily brusk, but it didn't seem to offend him. He walked placidly on smoking and smiling. They no longer heard those two singing voices. That silence troubled Miss Vyvyan desperately, created in her a horrible ache. While they were singing—but when they were not singing!

She scarcely knew what she was doing. When they arrived in front of the hotel she did not see it, and walked on towards Zurich. Now once more she heard the music of the band in the garden at the edge of the city. The belt of lights at right angles to their path stretching from shore to shore at the end of the lake, drew her eyes. Over there, among them, to the left was the Baur-au-Lac where Leon Meyer had taken rooms for September.

"I hear that Mr. Meyer has taken rooms at the Baur-au-Lac," she said. "Princess Teresco told me so the other day when I visited her." She had apparently spoken *à propos de bottes,* but Artz didn't seem surprised by her abrupeness.

"Yes, he is coming here," he said.

"I wonder why."

"As he is interested, and very naturally since I understand he is paying for it, in Miss Iselle's musical education, perhaps he is coming to Zurich to see how she is getting on. At any rate that seems to me probable."

"He has not let me know that he is coming."

"Perhaps he wished to give you—and Miss Iselle—a little surprise."

"Then you think he is coming here because of Pauline?"

"He has not told me so. But Mr. Meyer is not the kind of man who thinks it necessary to explain why he does this or that."

"Do you know where he is now?"

"Yes. He is at Bayreuth with his sister."

"Miss Anna! Is she coming here with him?

"I fancy not. I don't think any rooms have been taken for her."

They had now nearly reached the big bridge which crosses the Limmat at the point where it issues from the lake.

"Shall we go on to the Café de la Terrasse and have some coffee or ices?" said Artz.

Miss Vyvyan looked at him. There was something guilty and surreptitious in her eyes, which were generally so straightforward, eager and unselfconscious. She seemed to be hesitating. She even stood still as if about to turn back towards the hotel. But at last, overcoming her hesitation, she said:

"Thank you very much. If you are not in a hurry I think that would be very nice."

"Why should I be in a hurry? My work is done for the day. You and I are good friends. You will not mind if I drink a glass of Amstel beer?"

"Of course not."

"There are many things I want to say to you." For a moment she looked almost frightened. "Come along!" he said, in a voice that was suddenly authoritative. "There is no reason why the young ones should have it all their own way."

She went on with him towards the bridge.

She had quite forgotten about the left-behind hat.

XVI

MISS VYVYAN did not mention to Pauline that she knew of the night excursion with Carl Fügler on the lake. Her native sincerity was giving place to a semblance of subtlety which she sometimes felt to be Machiavellian. Dr. Artz had ventured to point out to her how necessary it is in this evil world to take care what one is doing.

"It is so easy to be misunderstood," he had said—among much else. "And perhaps nothing upsets and confuses people so much as the naked truth. I only give the naked truth to you because you are an exceptionally clever woman and will not be shocked by it."

Miss Vyvyan had gathered that Artz hadn't a very high opinion of the brains of either Pauline or Carl Fügler.

"But," he had added, "in Fügler's case much depends on the company he keeps. If he knocks about perpetually with pretty, but brainless, girls, he will never come to much. He's at an age when a brain of any value needs plenty of the right nourishment. The worst of it is that the passions of youth tear down too often instead of building up. From what I have heard I should imagine that Fügler is often his own enemy."

He had given Miss Vyvyan the impression that he looked upon Pauline as a girl with a gift which might bring her success, but as a girl with no brains worth troubling about. A remark to her about herself, that she was a woman much too clever to be "wasted," lay in her mind side by side with his statement that she had beautiful hair.

The episode of the night when he and she had heard the singing on the lake had cleared up for Miss Vyvyan one doubtful point about Artz. She was now convinced that the impression of the princess about his reason for wishing Pauline to be trained in Zurich had been a mistaken one. Artz had not shown jealousy about Carl Fügler and Pauline. Miss Vyvyan knew enough about jealousy now to be convinced that Artz

had not the slightest feeling for Pauline. His conduct on the night of the singing had proved that to Miss Vyvyan. Something else was to add weight to the proof in a very short time: his behavior when Leon Meyer arrived at the Baur-au-Lac.

Meyer arrived on the first of September, with a secretary, a valet and his chauffeur, but without Miss Anna, who had gone to stay with some friends near Vienna.

He telephoned at once to Artz to come and dine with him in the evening. But Artz hadn't expected him till the following day and was engaged. It was Artz's quartet evening. Miss Vyvyan was invited to dinner in the place of Artz. She accepted.

The strong heat of summer had not left Zurich, and Meyer felt that he could venture to have his dinner in the open arcade that borders the garden of the Baur-au-Lac. When Miss Vyvyan met him there each of them looked at the other with curious eyes, but with eyes which intended to conceal their own curiosity.

He told her they were to dine out of doors and then said, "Shall we begin with a cocktail?"

Immediately she remembered and knew he was remembering. "Have you ever taken Dr. Artz's cocktail, or pick-me-up, again?" she exclaimed.

"Very often. Have you?"

"No, never. I haven't felt the need of it."

"Perhaps that is because *you* have been living in Zurich," said Meyer with a sort of faded significance. "But I am not offering you Artz's magical potion. What I meant was a dry Martini or an inoffensive Bronx."

She heard the busy hum of voices. She saw the flowers and the many-colored lights. She felt the nearness of the lake with its night life, its nocturnal and secret pleasures which she had never shared, and said she would like to have a cocktail. Meyer ordered two dry Martinis. The waiters were round him, obsequious. The *maître d'hôtel* singled him out for attention. Whenever Miss Vyvyan was with Meyer she felt

the power of money like a strong hand upon her. She felt it now.

"Not as effective as Artz's," said Meyer, moving his little glass towards her little glass, as if it had to be done and so he did it. "But Artz is, I *think,* a very remarkable man. Let us go to dinner."

The *maître d'hôtel* led the way among dining Americans, who looked curiously at them as they passed by.

"We sit here, in this quiet corner." It was certainly the best-placed table in the arcade.

"You aren't sure then that he is remarkable," said Miss Vyvyan.

"Are you?"

"Yes. I am quite sure."

Meyer looked at her with deep interest over his cold consommé. "Perhaps you have had opportunities of judging of his capacities which I haven't had yet," he said. "How is Miss Iselle getting on?"

The transition was abrupt and took Miss Vyvyan by surprise. "Pauline? I think she is getting on well. Of course there hasn't been enough time yet for any astonishing improvement, but I understand that Monsieur Marakoff is very much interested in her."

"What is Marakoff teaching her?"

"Apparently the rôle of Margaret in Boito's 'Mefistofele.'"

Meyer's eyes, with their oddly reptilian look, which was always more marked when anything suddenly struck him, caught at his interest, examined Miss Vyvyan with sudden intensity over his *truite au bleu.*

"She is studying rôles already? Surely that is very quick work. She hasn't been here very long yet."

"No."

"And 'Mefistofele!' Can that be much good to her?"

"I don't know."

"It isn't very often done now. But Marakoff ought to know what he's doing. Then you have heard her sing the rôle of Margaret?"

"Only one bit of it: *'La luna immobile.'*"

"With the contralto. Is she singing concerted music already then?"

"I heard her in that. But it was quite by chance. And she didn't sing with a contralto but with a baritone."

"*'La luna immobile'* with a baritone! Marakoff couldn't have taught her that with a baritone!"

"I don't know. But I heard Pauline singing it with a baritone one night on the lake."

"What baritone?"

"A young man called Carl Fügler who is studying with Marakoff at the studio."

Meyer said nothing for a moment. His unnaturally smooth face with the two white marks near the ears looked grim, unrelenting, and suddenly older. The waiter took away the fish. Another waiter poured champagne into their glasses. The *maître d'hôtel* came up smiling and asked monsieur if everything was to his satisfaction. Meyer nodded irritably and said, "Yes, yes! It's all right." The *maître d'hôtel* retired, still smiling but rather less. A waiter brought them a stuffed chicken with tiny potatoes.

"So Marakoff allows Miss Iselle to sing out-of-doors at night!" said Meyer, as Miss Vyvyan was being carefully, almost tenderly, helped. "Garçon, take away this salad; cream on a hot night like this! Bring us a salad with a dressing of lemon juice and the best olive oil."

"Pauline was singing on the water at night, but I don't know whether Monsieur Marakoff knew of it."

"But haven't you spoken to her about it?"

"No, never."

"Why not?" asked Meyer, with unusual sharpness.

"Monsieur Marakoff has his own ideas about everything. He doesn't wish me to interfere with Pauline's education."

"Has he said that?"

"Yes."

"Excuse me for asking these questions. But as I have agreed

to arrange for Miss Iselle's musical education here I naturally feel I have some right to know how she is going on."

"Every right," said Miss Vyvyan.

"You haven't quarreled with Marakoff, I hope?"

"Oh, no! But he has told me quite plainly that he thinks I ought to keep away from Pauline."

"But you are staying on here. Doesn't that mean—"

"I may go any day," said Miss Vyvyan abruptly. There was a sudden uncontrolled bitterness in her voice. This talk about Pauline had renewed within her the sense of outrage which she had felt on the night of the singing.

"I hope not," said Meyer. "A young girl so unsophisticated as Miss Iselle appears to be needs someone to look after her in a city like this."

"I doubt whether Pauline is quite so unsophisticated as we were perhaps inclined to suppose. I think perhaps—" She stopped.

"Yes?" said Meyer, with unusual energy.

"In these days young girls know a good deal. And Pauline is out of her teens. I don't live with her any longer, you know. I live in the Eden Hotel and she is in a *pension,* in Madame Müller's *pension."*

"What sort of place is it?"

"Quite nice. Dr. Artz recommended it. By the way, there's a friend of yours living in it."

"The *salade,* m'sieu."

"Give some to madame."

"Bien, m'sieu."

"A friend of mine in a Swiss *pension!"* said Meyer, with an evident faint surprise. "Who is it?"

"Princess Teresco."

"Tina Teresco here in Zurich!" He helped himself carefully to salad, and tasted it critically. "Not bad! Garçon, give me some powdered sugar. . . . In a *pension!* Of course I know her." A rather ugly smile widened his dry lips. "What on earth is she doing in a *pension?"*

"She told me that she was a patient of Dr. Artz's and that she didn't want to meet a lot of people whom she knew just now."

"Tina Teresco a patient of Dr. Artz!" Again the ugly smile stretched his lips. "That's—quite amusing. And so she is still chasing after life! Temperament never changes." He looked across at Miss Vyvyan and a flicker of what seemed to her hopeless sarcasm went over his smooth blanched face, like a wintry gleam from a muffled sky. "I am not telling a secret when I tell you that Tina Teresco lives for men. She always has. She always will. Everyone knows that."

"But she's not at all young."

"That makes no difference. In some natures—hers is one—the passions become more emphatic with age."

"How dreadful!" Miss Vyvyan said.

There was an almost heartrending sound in her voice which seemed to interest him greatly. For he leaned a little forward over the table, and his eyes opened more widely as if he wished to see more.

"Why—dreadful?" he asked, in his thin and subtle voice.

"Isn't it dreadful to be eaten up by youthful passions when one isn't young any longer?"

"But—when there is Dr. Artz!" His horribly expressive eyes seemed deliberately endeavoring to establish intimacy with hers, intimacy which she was afraid of, wished to avoid, and yet, in some strange and very secret way, had a curious, perverse desire to give some encouragement to. "You and I—we incline to believe in Dr. Artz," he said.

"Did I say so?" It was a feeble evasion.

"But if you have given up looking after Miss Iselle?"

"I don't understand."

"You are staying on in Zurich."

In her wrinkles she felt the slow blood forcing its way to the surface. "Only for a short time. I usually keep away from London in August and September, and Zurich is very pleasant."

It was all very useless—under those eyes; yet she had to make that effort.

"Stay on—and give an eye to Miss Iselle. A voice such as hers is, a light though very beautiful voice, delicate in timbre, gets no good from being used in the night air on water. And as for *'La luna immobile,'* it is an outrage to let a baritone sing it instead of a contralto. If Marakoff is responsible he ought to be ashamed of himself."

She had never before seen Meyer show either violence or even the semblance of passion. But now veins swelled in his ghastly smooth face. The two scars by his ears showed red. His eyes gleamed, and the lights in them looked poisonous. His eyes were full of a greenish poison.

"I am paying and I shall see into this," he added. He looked as if he were full of seething anger. She was amazed at this revelation of his temperament. And all because Pauline had sung with a baritone a piece of music composed for a contralto! This intensity in old age was startling. Evidently Meyer's faded manner and weary appearance were really lies. In his eyes alone showed the truth of his temperament. What had he been like when he was young? She felt almost afraid of him.

He tapped a hand on the table.

"Marakoff must not think he is going to have things all his own way. I am a connoisseur of music, and if he has forgotten that I shall very soon set him right. I have no intention of wasting my money. Miss Iselle is not to be sacrificed because Marakoff— Who is this Carl Fügler?"

So he had retained the name! Miss Vyvyan explained about young Fügler.

"You know him well apparently," was Meyer's comment.

"Not very well. But of course I know him."

Again the Jewish eyes searched hers and she felt them trying pertinaciously after intimacy; again a smile came flickering on his thin lips.

When Miss Vyvyan left him that evening she realized how horribly intelligent he was. And she realized something else: that, influenced by something that was ugly, and not at all usual in her, she had put him on the track of a truth.

XVII

ON the following day Dr. Artz called upon Meyer and later in the afternoon a telephone message reached Miss Vyvyan from the Baur-au-Lac, informing her that Meyer and Artz were about to start from the hotel for Marakoff's studio, and would be glad to meet her there, if she cared, and was able, to come.

The message pleased her, even flattered her. Really she had been feeling acutely ever since she had been in Zurich her ousting from the intimate life of Pauline. She had suffered more than one kind of jealousy. Now these two men, both influential, the one through his money, the other through his masterful nature, were deliberately drawing her back into the musical life from which the big Russian had thrust her.

"I'll come of course!" she said eagerly into the telephone.

She put on her hat. As she did that she thought of the hatless evening. She looked in the glass. "My hair really is nice. If I only looked younger and weren't so lined it would make a beautiful setting for my face."

But the monkey face! And yet Artz had said—what hadn't he said over his Amstel beer in the restaurant that night?

As she left her room to go downstairs she met Princess Teresco, who was dressed for going out, as usual in white.

"How excited you look!" said the princess, examining Miss Vyvyan with her malicious light shifting eyes. "I'm sure you have a rendezvous. Who is he?"

"I am going to Marakoff's studio to meet Dr. Artz and Mr. Leon Meyer."

"Monsieur Leon has arrived!"

"Yes. I dined with him last night."

"Tiens! Tiens!" The princess seemed to be considering something. She played with her long white suède gloves. Her eyes looked feverishly thoughtful.

"Well, that's odd!" she said, after some process of thought

was finished. "I am going to the studio, too, as it happens. We can go there together."

"Do you know Monsieur Marakoff?" said Miss Vyvyan, surprised.

"I always know anybody I care to know," was the enigmatic reply, delivered with sudden hauteur. "Come along," she added, in her usual nervously vivacious manner. And she began to run down the corridor.

"Leon will be delighted to see me," she continued, when they were out of the house. "He and I are old lovers. Of course you know what a maniac he is?"

The light eyes looked maliciously sideways at Miss Vyvyan.

"No," said Miss Vyvyan, coldly. She found in this woman an extraordinary mixture of good and ill breeding. She was undeniably a lady, perhaps even a great lady. But she allowed herself liberties that were really inexcusable.

"Now you are hedging," said the princess, who sometimes used English slang, spoken always with a slight foreign accent. "But you English always hedge. You are so frightened of anything intimate. Of course you know quite well what a maniac Leon is!"

"I don't, and, please forgive me, but I have no wish to discuss Mr. Meyer's private affairs. He has been exceedingly kind to me, most generous and kind."

"I didn't say he was unkind. But he likes to have good reasons for his kindness. No doubt you have supplied him with an excellent reason. In fact I know you have."

There was definite malice in her voice. Miss Vyvyan shrank from the apparently incurable sarcasm of this uneasy woman's character, and was exasperated at having her unwelcome company in this expedition to the studio.

"I simply won't take her with me," she now said to herself. And she stopped in the road. They were on the hill and quite near to the studio.

"What are you stopping for?"

"Forgive me! But has Monsieur Marakoff asked you to come to his studio this afternoon?"

"Yes," said the princess, with a sudden sweet smile. "Where is it, this famous studio where little birds are trained to—sing? Is that it?" She pointed with a hand hidden in one of the white suède gloves.

"Yes."

"I am intuitive. I know it must be. A room in a garden, in a quiet garden. Really it looks quite a naughty room. One can imagine that many lessons, many different sorts of—lessons might be learned in that room. Are we to knock, or ring, or what?"

Without trusting herself to reply to this outburst Miss Vyvyan knocked on Marakoff's door. It was opened by Carl Fügler. And exactly at that moment a very large yellow and black limousine motorcar glided up to the garden gate. Meyer and Artz had arrived.

Miss Vyvyan shook hands with Carl Fügler and was forced to introduce him to the princess, who examined him eagerly, and quite suddenly changed her manner to softness and a quiet simplicity which were very sympathetic. Then Dr. Artz and Meyer came up.

The princess went up to Mr. Meyer, both hands outstretched. "My dear Leon! What an unexpected pleasure to see you again! I have so often thought of you and Bucharest. Bucharest and you! I think of you always together. Life was sweet then. And now we meet on the threshold of music at the studio of a very great artist whom it is a privilege to know."

"I wasn't aware you did know Monsieur Marakoff," said Meyer with glacial coldness, getting rid—that was how Miss Vyvyan saw it—of the clasping hands, and staring at his old love with eyes full of menace.

"I know everyone worth knowing. How do you do, Dr. Artz?" She turned, with that new gentleness already shown to Carl Fügler, to Dr. Artz. "I am so glad you told me about coming today. Let us go in and see the great man."

Before Artz could make any rejoinder she walked quickly in at the open door and they saw her go straight up to Marakoff, who was near the piano with Pauline and the young Mozart.

"I'm Tina Teresco, Dr. Artz's friend, the friend, too, of your charming pupil. Dr. Artz told me she was singing today so we have all come together to applaud her. Oh, Monsieur Marakoff, I have heard you in all your great parts. You remember Princess Teresco in Paris! I have thrown you many flowers from my box at the opera house. My husband used to say: *'Mais vous êtes amoureuse de Marakoff. Ce n'est plus la voix, c'est l'homme qui vous emballe!'* It is good to see you again." She said the last words with a sincerity that seemed really to come from the heart.

Marakoff at first had looked surprised, but when the Princess added, "Monsieur Leon and I are dear friends," he held out a big hand that seemed welcoming.

But Pauline, standing by, looked frozen, a northern lily filmed over with a coating of rime.

"Ah, my friend Monsieur Leon!" said Marakoff, now turning to Meyer. "So you find me here voiceless!" He put his hand to his mighty throat. "All gone—all! Not a note left! And clever Miss Anna—how is she?"

"My sister is well, and sends you her love. . . . Miss Iselle!" Meyer went up to Pauline slowly, in a curiously possessive way, as a man goes up to something which belongs to him, and is moreover known to belong to him.

"I have come here to see that all is going well with you. As you know, I have your musical interests at heart."

"Thank you, Mr. Meyer. I know. How can I help knowing?" She blushed.

"When I do a thing it always means something to me. What I sow I watch over. My intention is always to reap a good harvest. How are you getting on?" There was assertion in this, and no one could miss it. The Jew was demanding his money's worth.

"I think—I hope—" she looked at her master.

"I am well satisfied with Pauline," said Marakoff.

Meyer raised his eyebrows. There was surely assertion, too, in that vigorously said Christian name, pronounced in a fatherly way. Marakoff was taking a definite stand by his pupil.

Miss Vyvyan felt extraordinarily ill at ease. The presence of the princess was ruining everything. There was, there could be no intimacy, no freemasonry of musical artists, so long as this *"grande-dame"* of outrageous curiosity, of unheard-of "push," was there. And surely everyone felt that. Carl Fügler looked grim and formidable, the princess full of a smiling malice. Dr. Artz alone was impenetrable, showed a face which could not be read.

Now Marakoff was talking to Meyer and they were both looking at Pauline, who stood by silently with her eyes fixed not on them but on the wooden flooring of the low platform. Then she raised her eyes and Miss Vyvyan saw her look at Carl Fügler. Immediately the princess spoke to him, gently, simply, again with that sympathetic and entirely unaffected manner.

"And you, too, you are a pupil of Monsieur Marakoff's. What timbre of voice have you? Baritone? I knew it must be baritone. No tenor ever has a figure like yours. One doesn't know why."

"Dr. Artz!" said Miss Vyvyan, moving away.

"Yes?"

"Did you know the princess was coming here today?"

"Of course not."

"I think I shall go."

"But we asked *you* to meet us."

"I know. But what's the good of it?"

"But it is owing to you—all this!" He made a circular movement with his right arm. "This gathering in Zurich is owing to you."

"No—to *you!*" she retorted, with sudden sharp conviction. At that moment she saw Artz as a *deus ex machina.* And she had been working for him, had been made to work for him.

Artz smiled. "But you were able to persuade Monsieur Leon." A chord was struck on the piano. "Let us sit down here," said Artz. And he made her sit with him in a corner of the studio.

When Pauline had sung something the princess broke into

extravagant praises that sounded deliberately insincere, making so much of Pauline's performance that she reduced it altogether to absurdity. "Another Patti!" she said, among other things.

Marakoff, who was as sincere as a rock in all questions of art, said to Pauline rather savagely, "Do not you believe it!"

The princess, laughing, whispered something to Fügler.

"Now, Carl," said Marakoff, looking at the intruder from Roumania with growing and obvious irritation, "you shall sing a duet with Mademoiselle l'Alouette. Come here!"

Carl went eagerly to the platform. The princess's eyes followed him, crept, insectlike, all over his splendid figure, then shot a steel-cold glance at Pauline. Miss Vyvyan noticed that glance with a terrible feeling of understanding, even of echoing. It was as if at that moment the princess showed to her herself, or something of herself, of the woman who had listened in the night with Dr. Artz to two voices singing on the water. She shivered. Could she ever be akin to the princess?

Meyer didn't seem to be welcoming the idea of a duet with great enthusiasm. And Marakoff's big, clean-shaven face, usually dramatic, showed a sudden heaviness which indicated opposition for the instant endured with politeness. Miss Vyvyan couldn't hear properly what was being said, and now Artz began to say something to her, as if on purpose to prevent her from hearing.

"What do you mean, Monsieur Leon? I do not understand what you are talking of." Marakoff's voice was suddenly loud, irritated. "*I* teach my pupils to travesty famous music, or any music! *I* give contralto music to a man! What is all this?" The big man swung round, almost savagely, to Pauline and Fügler. "Here is Monsieur Meyer protesting that he does not wish to hear you two sing together music composed for two women, that such doings offend his taste and his sense of art. What does this mean? When have I ever taught you two any such prostitution? Explain to me!" He flung out his big hands. "I understand nothing of this."

Dr. Artz looked at Miss Vyvyan and there was grim laughter

in his small eyes. "So *you* told Monsieur Leon!" he said. "For I did not."

Never before in all her life had Miss Vyvyan felt so humiliated, for never before had she been conscious of her ugliest part being completely understood. "I didn't intend—I never supposed—"

"Didn't you know that Monsieur Meyer can spit venom like a snake when he is offended?"

"But—"

"Don't you understand yet that music on the water at night might easily offend him?"

There was a mingling of voices on the platform. Marakoff was obviously angry and he was a man who looked overpowering when he was angry. The princess sitting just below the platform was playing with her gloves and listening with a sort of feverish amusement, watching, with alert and malicious eyes. Pauline looked terribly upset, as if she were near to crying, yet sulky too. Carl Fügler stood up to his master boldly, but not with defiance.

"It was my fault, maestro. I suggested it. You had run through the soprano part with her and I said: 'Let us sing it. I will take the contralto.' That is how it was. Miss Iselle simply agreed because I wished it. And after all, where is the harm? Where is the outrage? It is not as if we were singing to an audience. We were singing to ourselves. How could we know that this gentleman, who is so critical about music, would hear us?"

"I did not hear you, monsieur," said Meyer's voice, thin as always, but with a peculiar vibration in it which showed his acute irritation. "You were heard by others."

Suddenly Carl turned round and looked towards Dr. Artz.

"I suppose you heard us, Dr. Artz, and reported us. Why not go to the police at once in such a case? Surely the population of Zurich should be protected against such proceedings!"

Artz got up. "I did have the pleasure of hearing you, Herr Fügler, and enjoyed it very much."

"And yet you complained to this gentleman!"

"I beg your pardon. I never mentioned it to anyone. Such trifles as this do not trouble my mind."

Meyer suddenly recovered himself. "What does it matter?" he said, in his usual voice. "I merely say that I prefer to hear music sung by the voices for which it is written. And I suppose most musicians would agree with me. Now, my dear Marakoff, let us by all means hear something more. Whatever you choose."

But Marakoff was seriously upset. He was an artist, not a man of the world. When he was angry he did not mind showing it. "Enough of music for today," he said brutally in answer to Meyer's palliative remark. "No untrained artists can sing in the midst of confusion, criticism, objections to this and that. Calm is needed, the proper atmosphere." His long slanting eyes, full of somber light, swept the room. "We have not got it here."

He seemed to be accusing everyone in the studio. But suddenly his face changed, softened. He had looked at Pauline. "But, my dear child, this is after all only a rehearsal," he said, "a rehearsal for your future rehearsals in opera houses! Have I not undertaken to prepare you for opera? Must I not train you not only in music but to support human nature? Do you think an opera singer has not to fight humanity? Wait till you rehearse your first opera with a bad-tempered conductor, a jealous contralto, a baritone with the abominable make-up of Carl Fügler, and a diabolical tenor—like me! And still you must sing your best. Yes, in spite of it all! Now, no tears and sulks! You *shall* sing again. No, Carl, not with you. You shall be punished today for having committed that outrage of singing a woman's part. Mademoiselle l'Alouette shall sing alone. Fritz, play for us the spinning-wheel song from the 'Faust' of Gounod. Not Boito this time— Ah!"

Pauline choked down—something. She had sent accusing glances to Miss Vyvyan alone in her corner. Miss Vyvyan had not returned them. Carl, too, had accused Miss Vyvyan. His eyes she had seen. What a hateful afternoon! She felt raw all over. Her moral agony that day was extraordinary. Did Dr.

Artz know it? What didn't he know? That unquiet tongue of hers! Why, why didn't she bridle it? But it had spoken to Meyer with deliberate malice. She hated herself and them all.

While Pauline was singing the spinning-wheel song she did a thing that was extraordinary simply because *she* did it. She got up and slipped away.

She who had always been so courageous!

XVIII

BY going she missed a curious scene which, had she been present at it, must have interested her painfully.

While Pauline was singing the spinning-wheel song Dr. Artz remained where he was. But as soon as it was finished, he went with an odd smooth quickness to the princess, who was about to speak to Carl Fügler.

"Princess!" he said, and there was something imperative in his voice. The princess turned round rather petulantly. "I want you to come and sit with me at the end of the studio."

"Why?" Her face hardened. Two lines showed about her small, lustful mouth.

"The singing sounds better from there."

"But the singing is over unless—" She looked again at Carl Fügler, who was speaking to Fritz Rauch with an air of brooding discontent.

"Come! I want to talk to you."

"What a slave-driver you are! Don't think though that it is your personality that governs me. No, it's what you can do, or what they, and you, say you can do. As a man you mean nothing to me!" She spoke half jokingly. But there was a hint of malice in her voice.

Artz was unruffled. "Of course I am too old for you," he said, in a low voice, "when there is anyone younger than I

about. I know that. She is going to sing again." Raising his voice he said, "Marakoff, we are going to listen from the back."

Marakoff stared down at them as if startled. He had probably forgotten them. "Very well!" he growled. His eyes, when they rested on the princess, were unfavorable.

The princess, looking cross, followed Artz to the back of the room. Pauline sang again. Then there was more talk on the platform and presently a curious loud humming arose, an Italian melody suggested *bouche fermée.*

"Marakoff!" said the princess.

"You see he still wants to sing, as I was saying!" said Dr. Artz. "His instinct to sing is as vital as ever it was. And how do we know—" He leaned closer to her, but his face was not surreptitious. On the contrary it looked bland and almost benign.

She listened—presently she listened with keen attention. "Yes? Yes?"

Fügler was talking with Marakoff and Pauline, while Meyer stood watching Pauline from under his drooping eyelids. At times his eyelids drooped as if weary over his untired eyes, the wearied body relaxing in despite of itself, dropping down, like a blind, over the untired, perhaps still greedy, soul. Fritz Rauch joined in the talk. He fetched some music from the piano. Marakoff took it. The two pupils bent their heads looking at it while Marakoff turned the leaves.

The princess and Dr. Artz were now very deep in talk. It seemed that he had the power at moments even to detach her feverish attention from the body of a splendid young man. The bland benignity had disappeared from his face which had become heavy with earnestness. Indeed earnestness, like a cloud, seemed to emanate from it to envelop that frivolous, yet intent, spirit, intent in mania, frivolous in the conduct of life.

Marakoff went back on his word. Carl Fügler had a power of drawing the sting from him that was possessed by few or none. He had grown really to love Carl for his good honest heart and his bright, sometimes furiously animated, spirit of youthfulness.

"Very well! We forgive you. You shall sing!"

Meyer said nothing. But Marakoff didn't worry about Meyer. He always went his own way with a large disregard of small shadows slipping over the path. So Carl sang, a duet with Pauline, but not *"La luna immobile."* The princess and Artz of course listened, the princess with hatred in her eyes, Artz with a calm gravity, apparently of pleasure.

When the duet was over she whispered: "Their voices don't go together—not a bit! She's a mere squeak beside *him!"*

Then she sprang up. "Marakoff!" she exclaimed, apparently driven by an irresistible impulse. "Sing something to us!"

"I!" He looked startled. His eyes opened wide. "I cannot sing. Everyone knows that."

"I don't believe it. It's a pose."

"A *pose!"* Marakoff said, with acute bitterness.

"Or else it's an obsession of fear." Her voice was suddenly cutting.

"Madame!" exclaimed Marakoff. "Do you accuse me of being a coward?"

"Great artists like you are too sensitive. A slight hoarseness and the cry goes up, 'I have no voice today. I cannot sing.' Your voice may not be quite what it was but—"

"Madame, I have no voice. No voice at all!"

"When I look at you I cannot believe that."

"When you look—what has that to do with it?"

"I see power in you, force. You are still full of drama."

"Drama! That lies deep in the soul. Only madness, or the coming on of senility, can get at that. But the vocal chords—"

"Try! Try! I heard you humming just now one of those Italian songs that you, a Russian, used to sing better than any Italian—"

"Humming is not *singing,* God knows!" A look of angry despair distorted his large, dramatic face.

"Only try! I would give anything to hear you again. People in Rome, in Paris, everywhere, are still talking of you. You are not forgotten. There is nobody like you now. There are beautiful voices, but the genius, the dramatic power you have

isn't in them. What would I not give to hear you once more in—"

"Madame! I beg of you! My voice is *gone!*"

The last word came from him almost with a cry. But the princess, with a persistence that began to seem maniacal, continued to beg:

"Try, and the spell will be broken and you will sing once more. I feel it. I am certain of it. Something that knows inside me tells me that I shall hear you sing again. If your voice is really gone it will come back. My dear Marakoff, you are not an old man. You cannot be more than—"

"Madame—princess—*basta! Basta! Basta!*"

It was an outburst. He was looking down the room. He was looking at Dr. Artz. And Dr. Artz, as if obeying a signal, came from the end of the room and took the princess away. When she had gone Marakoff dropped down in a chair, livid and perspiring.

"That woman! That awful woman! Why did she come? I did not ask her. I do not know her. She says she threw flowers to me in Paris. I have never seen her before. That I swear. A little more and my hands would have been on her throat. Ah, my voice, my poor splendid voice! If I could get it back! She is right—that dreadful woman with the light wicked eyes. I am full of drama still. But it is rotting inside of me because it cannot be used, because I cannot use it. It is turning moldy, I tell you. There is the phosphorescence of decay all over it. It is doing me harm, deadly harm, inside—here! It is bringing death, a slow death to me. I want to use it. I need to use it. But I cannot. It will kill me. There! Now go! Carl, take this child home, straight back to the *pension.* You hear! No going to the boats!"

Still sitting, and with his big hands hanging between his knees, he stared up at Carl and Pauline. His eyes were full of desperation, yet they were searching. They searched the two faces.

"She is here for music, to learn, to study, not for pleasure, not for—" He paused, still staring. "Go! Go."

The two pupils turned away, awed by this sudden tremendous outburst. They heard Marakoff behind them say, "And you, Monsieur Leon—"

"I shall stay with you for a few minutes, Marakoff. We must have a talk."

"Oh, well—well—I know she is your protégée."

When she came out into the sunshine Pauline was shaking. Her whole body was shaking. Carl put an arm under hers.

"That dreadful woman! How could she? Why did she?"

"It was all that devil, Dr. Artz!" said Carl Fügler, with savage conviction.

XIX

MISS VYVYAN had gone away from Marakoff's studio full of humiliation and self-reproach, driven away—so she had felt it—by the accusing eyes of Pauline and Carl Fügler. They knew who had told Meyer about that fatal duet on the lake at night. Their eyes had said so. Pauline's had looked painfully wondering, but Carl's had surely been brutally condemnatory. The child's contemptuous word "telltale" had come up in Miss Vyvyan's mind. What was she? A telltale. An elderly telltale laying deliberate information against youth. For she knew what had prompted her to let Meyer know that fact about the girl he was paying for.

And then? What had she secretly desired that he should do?

She didn't dare to go to Pauline. She felt that after what had happened pleasant intercourse between them was impossible. She did not dare to go again to the Dolder. The day after the scene at the studio was a Saturday. It had been tacitly understood that she and Fügler would play a match together. Dr. Artz's voice through the telephone inquired whether Miss Vyvyan wanted him to run her up in his two-seater. She said hastily that she wasn't going to play. It was much too hot. She felt as if his voice were smiling as he answered that he thought so, too.

As she put up the receiver she was hating Dr. Artz. Wasn't he responsible for everything? She saw him again, and even more clearly now, as one who manipulated human beings for his own purposes, and who had not only—for she believed, could not help believing in his claim—the power of bringing about in them peculiar physical change, but also an even subtler power of pushing their natures this way and that, whither he willed. But why should he will?

Perhaps he was haunted by a perpetual lust to gather in patients and used a moral preparation for future physical purposes. At the café on that ugly night which she now hated to think of he had even tried to persuade her to a certain giving up, and he had nearly persuaded her. But why this intentness on her?

She had not yet absolutely grasped the fact that Dr. Artz looked upon her as a most unusual and delightful specimen. Nor had she grasped another fact not unconnected with Pauline. For though, since she had known Dr. Artz, she had become, for her, quite amazingly analytical, using her brains in a new way, Dr. Artz still possessed the faculty to throw dust in her eyes when he wished to.

It became more and more evident to Miss Vyvyan that her suspicions of him with regard to Pauline had been absurdly ill-founded. The coming to Zurich of Meyer brought evidence in Dr. Artz's favor.

Miss Vyvyan's eyes, sometimes so short-sighted, were now widely opened on Meyer's character. She saw him clearly, with secret disgust, as the victim of mania. Princess Teresco had spoken of him as a maniac. And she had a peculiar capacity for recognizing maniacs, being one herself.

Dr. Artz drew maniacs to Zurich; not people actually mad, but people obsessed by manias. He knew why Meyer was paying for Pauline's education and, after Meyer came to Zurich, Miss Vyvyan came to know, too. A very dreadful thing was this that, knowing, she tacitly complied with a situation that she ought to have revolted against directly she definitely understood it.

Since the hideous day at the studio Miss Vyvyan had fearfully avoided both Carl Fügler and Pauline. She did not visit the studio. She did not visit the *pension*. And Pauline did not come to her at the Eden. There were times when she hoped and feared that Pauline would come. But evidently the girl had been disgusted by the tale-bearing and couldn't get over it. And yet what a little thing that was when set against all that Miss Vyvyan had done for her!

There were many moments when Miss Vyvyan dwelt painfully, angrily even, on the cruelty inherent in youth. She felt bitter about it. But she had to blame herself even more than she blamed Pauline.

As to Carl Fügler, she admired him too much to blame him. Besides he owed nothing to her, and it was impossible that he could understand the motives, some of them obscure enough, which had prompted her to indiscretion. Of course he was angry, as any young man would be angry, at being "given away" and then blown up by his maestro before strangers. Miss Vyvyan wanted terribly to see Carl Fügler and try to put things right with him.

One person she specially didn't want to see, Princess Teresco, and therefore, naturally enough, it was the princess who paid her a visit and caught her in the hall of the hotel.

"I've come to say *au revoir* to you," said the princess.

"You are going away?" said Miss Vyvyan, grateful to Heaven for at least one small mercy in the midst of her miseries.

"May I sit down?"

They sat down in the deserted hall.

"You are going back to Roumania?"

"No. I'm going into a *clinique* for a short time, a *clinique* a few miles out of Zurich, behind the Dolder. I'm going to have an operation."

"I'm sorry."

"Not a serious one. What's an operation to a woman nowadays? Every woman one knows has been operated on."

"I haven't," said Miss Vyvyan.

"No? Not yet?" The princess's tone was interrogative—

satirically. "Are you afraid of such a trifle as an operation?" she said, leaning forward as if she couldn't sit still, and then, as suddenly, leaning back.

"I didn't say so."

"Well, I'm not. In fact I'm quite looking forward to it. I go tomorrow, and I thought I should like to see you first."

Miss Vyvyan wondered why.

"You interest me. You have always interested me."

"Indeed!" said Miss Vyvyan, feeling intensely English and stiff.

"Yes. You are capable of extremes and many are not. I dare say you have often been very good, but I'm equally sure you might be very evil."

"Very kind of you to say so!" said Miss Vyvyan, feeling hot all over, and disliking this extraordinary woman more than ever.

"Don't be angry. That is how I see you. And my eyes are fairly sharp. I don't miss very much really. I've lived in the world so—a fairly long time, in the world, not in the hole-and-corner world where nothing in particular happens. Realization of what one has missed often leads to bad behavior or even to crime."

"I don't know what you mean. I don't know what you are talking about."

"I was watching you in Marakoff's studio."

Miss Vyvyan's confusion and anger became so great when she heard that remark that she got up from her chair. "Really, princess!" she began. "I can't allow you or anyone else to—"

But the princess got up, too, very quickly and very lightly, and, smiling, laid a hand on Miss Vyvyan's arm. "When you drank Dr. Artz's cocktail in Carlton House Terrace you realized something. Now didn't you?"

"Who told you I had—"

"But I had the same cocktail with Monsieur Leon only yesterday, and after it he got so excited that *he* told me."

"Well, there's no secret about it."

"But you wish I didn't know!"

Miss Vyvyan felt absolutely exasperated. The worst of it was that with the exasperation was mingled a sort of confused feeling of guilt, of having been found out.

"Didn't you realize something?"

"Princess, I'm very sorry to have to say it but I dislike being asked questions about entirely private matters. You must please forgive me. I—"

"Qui ne veut pas répondre donne la réponse!"

Miss Vyvyan positively tingled with anger.

"Well, *au revoir,"* said the still smiling princess. "I'll see you when I come out. You interest me tremendously. And you interest others, too. The *clinique* I am going to tomorrow behind the Dolder belongs to Dr. Artz. When he takes you up to golf he goes on there. He is going to operate on me."

XX

AFTER the princess had retired into the *clinique* behind the Dolder Miss Vyvyan sat down to take stock of the situation in which she now found herself. The news of the impending operation had roused in her a curious excitement which was combined with a sensation of repulsion, almost of terror. She could not forget the look in the princess's light eyes when that satirical question had been put, "No? Not yet?" The implication had been so clear: "Not yet. But you are coming to it. Like me you will be operated on by Dr. Artz." And what then? The return into the world after the period, long or short, of seclusion—what would that be like? The coming out? But that must depend upon who, or what, issued forth.

About that entity Miss Vyvyan's enlarging imagination played with a dreadful vivacity. She saw visions: old wrecks going in, semijuvenile monsters coming out tinged with the pigments of the unnatural. She watched the princess, Meyer, Marakoff, herself going in: the princess with her excited and lustful eyes, unquiet, ever seeking after evading youth; Meyer

with his dreadfully smooth weariness, the pale scars beside his ears, his drooping dust-dry lips and seeking aged hands; Marakoff clutching his big throat from which the voice had vanished; herself with her screwed-up face all covered with twitching wrinkles. The procession going in!

And what would come out? Dr. Artz alone knew. If indeed even he knew. And then her imagination rose to greater heights, and she saw the doors of the *clinique* opening and types of the unnatural, of those who refused their destiny, coming out to take up their new lives in the world, coming out to join once more in the riotous dance of youth.

And she was troubled. It seemed that fundamentally she was a healthy-minded woman, the type of woman who accepts without too much questioning, and that something, or someone, had turned her all awry. She could not get back to her former straightness, but on the other hand she could not feel at home with her awryness. And so she was more than uneasy; she was terribly miserable. When she now looked back upon her life before she had met Dr. Artz, and saw herself busy, enthusiastic, hard working, hard thinking, bothered about money certainly, but surrounded by friends who admired her gift and knew her for a thorough good sort, she wondered how she had ever come to the pass she was in now. By almost imperceptible steps, it seemed to her, she had been led from an artist's paradise to the door of Dr. Artz's *clinique*.

Should she, like the princess, go inside?

She was brought up against that debate, and for two days, two long solitary days, and two nights of sleeplessness, she fought with herself, or herself fought with the semicreated new creature that surely Dr. Artz was at work on.

She strove to review the past, to appreciate at its exact value the present, to foresee the future—or rather two futures, one if she gave up, and the other if she gave in.

She had been frightened by a vision of her own possibilities, summoned up by certain facts, and also by certain words of the princess. That unpleasant woman was horribly sharp-witted. "I dare say you have been very good, but I'm quite sure

you might be very evil. Realization of what one has missed often leads to bad behavior or even to crime."

Her possibilities! Dr. Artz had begun to show them to her subtly, and already others had hinted of them. Worst of all she herself was now staring at them in full light.

And Pauline knew—and Carl Fügler knew. As to Dr. Artz, hadn't he always known?

There were two things either of which she might do. She might now at once begin to pack, might pay her bill at the Eden, take a ticket for home, and be off to England. In that case, for mere form's sake, she would have to go and say good-by to Pauline, to Marakoff, to Meyer, and—yes, surely—to Dr. Artz. To Carl Fügler? There was no obligation. None would expect a woman of her age to pay a farewell visit to a young student merely because she had played some games of golf with him. So she needn't, she of course wouldn't, see Carl Fügler to say good-by to him. But she would leave a message for him. With Pauline? Yes, that would be best; with Pauline. And then the station, the train and—home!

Could she do it?

The other alternative was obstinately to stay on in Zurich, outside of the lives of Pauline and of Carl, secretly blamed, perhaps despised, by them, with no *raison d'être,* with nothing special to do, spectator at a distance of the activities and happiness in which she had no share. If she did that, how would it end? Something told her, with a secret steady voice, that it would end in that *clinique* behind the Dolder. And—afterwards?

She was afraid of that afterwards. But she was also afraid of the return home to England. She felt as if she could not go right out of the life of Pauline—and of other lives here in Zurich. Even Dr. Artz held her.

Nevertheless, after the two days and nights, she thought she had made up her mind. Self-respect had won the battle and she had decided to go. She began to pack her trunks. They were not many. She hadn't a great many clothes.

Then she must say good-by to Pauline, and of course to

Madame Müller. Then there were Marakoff and Meyer. Last of all she would go to Dr. Artz.

She went first to the *pension*. Pauline was out. Madame Müller came to tell Miss Vyvyan so. "Is it important, mademoiselle?"

"It's only that I'm going away and came to say good-by."

Madame Müller looked concerned. "Going away? So soon? Pauline will be very sorry. Did she know it?"

"I have nothing more to do here and"—she forced a smile through her wrinkles—"Pauline is in safe hands."

"Ah, mademoiselle, she will come to no harm with me."

"Give her my messages, please."

"But surely you will come back when Pauline is in. Surely."

"No, really I can't. I have no time. Good-by. Take care of Miss Iselle."

She went down the stairs leaving Madame Müller looking grave and amazed. To go like that! And to speak of Pauline as "Miss Iselle!"

From the *pension* Miss Vyvyan walked to Marakoff's studio, but when she got there she heard Carl Fügler singing inside and stopped in the garden outside the shut door.

Carl was singing Valentine's song from Gounod's "Faust," "Even bravest heart." Standing very still in the September sunshine Miss Vyvyan listened with painful attention. And it was as if she listened to a life that she longed to enter into, to stay in, to identify herself with. At the end of the first verse there was a long pause, a silence that seemed to her unnatural, like a silence out of the world. She had little doubt that Marakoff in the studio was criticizing Fügler's rendering of the aria. Nevertheless, because of her state of mind, the silence seemed peculiar, almost mystical, to Miss Vyvyan. It was broken by a strange sound.

She heard a hoarse, almost toneless, yet strongly dramatic voice, without resonance, without carrying power, but somehow expressive of interior force, temperamental force, suggesting Valentine's song. It uttered a few bars of the song then abruptly stopped in the middle of a phrase.

Miss Vyvyan shivered in the sunshine. She knew she had heard Marakoff trying once more to sing. She had heard ruin, had heard what was no more. That was how she put it to herself. She had heard not only Marakoff, but herself, Meyer, the whole company of the "has-beens." She turned and went out of the garden. Impossible now to say good-by to Marakoff. Carl Fügler was with him. Perhaps Pauline was there, too.

As she reached the gate Carl Fügler's fine youthful baritone voice, full of ardor and strength, rose up again, in the second verse of the song. Miss Vyvyan waited for a moment by the gate. She ought not to have waited. Something happened in that pause of listening which she was not aware of then but understood afterwards, something happened to her will. It underwent fascination, the exact fascination which was most dangerous to it.

When she passed out of the garden gate into the sunny road without knowing it she had lost a battle. But her trunks were packed and she was going to pay, she believed, two farewell visits.

First she went to the Baur-au-Lac. Meyer was out. She left her card with "Good-by. I am leaving for England" written on it. Then she walked up Bahnhofstrasse till she came to a taxicab stand. She knew Dr. Artz's address. He lived in Kreuzbuhlstrasse. She engaged a taxicab and drove there.

When the cab stopped she saw a large house, handsome, dignified, pale in color, with an iron gateway guarding a long piece of carefully kept garden full of late summer flowers. She got out and asked the taxi driver to wait.

"I may not go in," she said, in German. "If I do it will only be for a very short time."

She rang the bell. The taxi driver saw a man servant appear and his fare went inside. He then waited for over an hour and a half, much to his satisfaction. It was early evening when Miss Vyvyan came out of the house. Dr. Artz was with her when the large door opened, but he only came to the top of the steps. He was bare-headed and held a red rose in his hand, which he twisted between his fingers, as he stood and talked

gravely to his visitor, holding his odd figure very erect, the back hollowed, the chest well pushed out.

Presently he held out his right hand, changing the rose he was holding to his left hand. The taxi driver heard him say some English words which he didn't understand. They were the following:

"Come tomorrow then at eleven o'clock punctually, and I will give you the first *piqûre.*"

Then the odd-looking elderly lady, active but with, as the Swiss chauffeur thought, no figure at all, so wizened and thin and dried-up it was, came down to the gate. The man opened it.

"Now please go to the Eden Hotel."

As the cab went away Dr. Artz stood under the portico twisting his rose about in his fingers and smiling.

XXI

KHALIL IBRAHIM, the young Egyptian who all unwittingly had caused Mrs. Simon to refuse the money for Pauline's musical education, and so had inadvertently opened the way for the lark's flight to Zurich, came to that town late in September to resume his studies at the university. He had not forgotten the fair girl with the silver-gray eyes, though, being a clever youth with all an Oriental's natural wiliness where women were concerned, he had never spoken of her again to his friend Mrs. Simon, who was delightfully rich and really not at all unattractive considering her years. These Englishwomen of a certain class managed to take such great care of themselves that their looks lasted astonishingly.

Khalil had neither forgotten Pauline, nor forgotten a remark made about her by the buoyant Heckner, that he could "see her with a prayer-book and the Devil at her elbow." This remark had excited Khalil as Pauline's northern fairness had excited him. The prayer-book and the Devil! He would like to play the Devil with that very charming creature, so

simple apparently, so wondering and earnest. He remembered the exact look in the big eyes which had been raised to his, which had seemed to be asking him questions. Perhaps in Zurich he could answer some of those questions. At any rate he meant to try.

Chance intervened in his favor. On his very first day at the university he met the American student Harry Van Deyn, who lodged at Madame Müller's *pension,* and Van Deyn mentioned Pauline, "a little English girl who sings like a lark and is training with Marakoff."

"I know her," said Khalil, and his large dark eyes softened. "Ask me to dine at the *pension* and you must come to me at the Gotthard." Van Deyn agreed and so three days after his arrival at Zurich Khalil met Pauline. Within the week he was established as a boarder in the *pension.*

Madame Müller was observant. But Khalil could be discreet. He had charming, genial manners, was connected with the royal family of Egypt—his mother was an Egyptian princess, his father a pasha—was very handsome and not too terribly dark, dark enough to be very attractive but not enough to frighten people who were fussy about "color." His body was graceful. His gestures were soft and intelligent. He talked well and was more cultivated than the average English youth of his age. Very soon he fascinated the *pension.* The elderly ladies in it spoke of him as "Prince Ibrahim" and as "his Highness," and addressed him as "monseigneur." He did not ask them not to do this, although he was only "Nabil." If it amused them, why interfere? And his mother was really a princess!

Pauline liked him, too. He had not made love to her yet.

Khalil came to live at the *pension* just when Pauline was beginning to be disturbed, when her natural detachment from the human riot of desires, passions, attempts after happiness, clamorings after intimacy, was being interfered with by fate, when she was becoming definitely troubled about the human beings around her, with whom she was slightly, or more closely, connected.

She had been "upset" by Miss Vyvyan's conduct. Although

she had often chafed in her girlish way against her first teacher's imperious guidance, she had always believed thoroughly in Miss Vyvyan's *bona fides* and affection for her. It had never occurred to her as a possibility that Miss Vyvyan might play her what daddy would certainly have called "a dirty trick." Yet that dirty trick had surely been played, when Miss Vyvyan had complained to Mr. Meyer, who paid for her, about the expedition at night upon the lake and the singing in a boat with Carl Fügler. Miss Vyvyan should have spoken to her, Pauline, if she had any criticism to make. But to go "behind her back" and complain to Mr. Meyer—that was certainly not playing the game. Her eyes in the studio had accused Miss Vyvyan, and Miss Vyvyan had looked thoroughly ashamed of herself and had gone away before the singing was over.

Pauline felt quite differently about Miss Vyvyan from that moment. And so, she knew, did Carl. She couldn't go to see Miss Vyvyan. She felt that if she went she must be thoroughly ill at ease with her, with that nasty act of semitreachery always in her mind. Carl and she had discussed the matter and Carl had expressed himself strongly—he always expressed himself strongly—about Miss Vyvyan's conduct.

"I should never have expected her to do a thing like that. I thought she was a thorough good sort," he had said. "Meyer was the last person she should have complained to, as he is paying for your education." And then he had added gustily, "I do wish he wasn't!"

Pauline had asked him why, but he hadn't chosen to tell her. She had only been able to gather that he had taken a strong dislike to Mr. Meyer. "He's another of Dr. Artz's devotees. I can't bear that crowd!" he had said.

His curious hatred of Dr. Artz, which Pauline did not share, seemed to grow with every passing day. To her Dr. Artz meant very little. She thought him very ugly. She supposed he was clever. He had always been polite to her and had helped her at the beginning of things in Zurich. Madame Müller, to whom and to whose artistic brother Pauline was now devoted in her quiet way, seemed to have a great opinion

of his capacities as a doctor and man of science. But all that didn't concern Pauline. She was purely a singing bird, ambitious in singing, earnest and devoted in singing. Doctoring, science—that sort of thing wasn't any concern of hers. She was young and had perfect health. All this fetish-worship of Dr. Artz, of which indeed she was but vaguely aware, merely surprised her when she considered it at all. Even Carl Fügler's hatred did not make a really potent impression upon her. For Carl was habitually violent in speech, as he often was also in manner. And she had found out that one needn't be afraid of him. He was really frightfully kind and good-hearted although looking and seeming so formidable.

Her first fear of him and of his overpowering masculinity had departed long ago. She knew him for what he was, a gentle giant, who was violently unconventional, who had fierce brain-convictions, a mighty flood of tremendously vital and often denunciatory speech, a manner so animated and dynamic that it often startled or even alarmed people unaccustomed to it, but who was full of secret kindnesses, of sentiment, of kindly desires and intentions. Carl often raved against life and the damnable stupidity of the human race, but he simply couldn't be malicious in conduct, and he was amazingly susceptible to kindness. He was also the most warmly affectionate being whom Pauline had ever met.

But he did hate Dr. Artz.

And now everybody seemed to be attracted to Dr. Artz, or to be at any rate "in the hands," as Carl Fügler called it, "of that damned fellow, Artz." The princess had disappeared into a *clinique,* and the whole *pension* knew that she was being operated upon—for what no one could exactly say—by Dr. Artz. Monsieur Leon, it was rumored, was in Zurich for Dr. Artz, though Pauline wasn't absolutely certain yet about that. And now—most startling and unexpected of all possible occurrences!—Miss Vyvyan had been "got hold of" by Dr. Artz. Oh, and Carl Fügler asseverated, with many violent and picturesque expressions, such as he always found with the greatest ease when once well heated up by conversation, or monologue,

that Dr. Artz was after her beloved master Marakoff, and would never let Marakoff go until he'd got him safe in that God-blasted *clinique* behind the Dolder.

But that *clinique* was not God-blasted. On the contrary, it survived in tranquil privacy, cream-colored and pale blue with orange-colored awnings, in the woods above Zurich.

Since that unpleasant day in the studio Pauline had had an interview with Miss Vyvyan. Madame Müller's astounding news of Miss Vyvyan's farewell visit, and abrupt departure from the *pension,* had sent Pauline in haste to the Eden Hotel. She could not let Miss Vyvyan leave Zurich without an attempt to say good-by to her. She had found Miss Vyvyan in the hotel and, forgetting for the moment what had happened to chill their relations, had expressed her surprise and sorrow that Miss Vyvyan was going away. In reply she had been informed that Miss Vyvyan had changed her mind and meant to stay on for a time. The information was given with obvious embarrassment. Indeed it seemed to Pauline, who wasn't very observant, that Miss Vyvyan looked more than embarrassed, guilty almost. She couldn't then understand why. Indeed, she didn't fully understand even when Carl Fügler told her later on that Miss Vyvyan had become one of Dr. Artz's patients.

"That is why she is staying on. She's in the hands of Artz, like the rest of them. I have seen her going into his house. One day I happened to meet her coming out of his gate. She looked horribly ashamed of herself."

"But if she isn't well, why shouldn't she be treated by Dr. Artz? What is there to be ashamed of?"

"There's nothing the matter with them all but what must come to you and me in the course of nature."

"What's that?"

"Old age, Mademoiselle Pauline. They are trying to be made young again."

"But how can they be made young? It's impossible."

"The wonderful Artz says it isn't, and I suppose they believe him. Even your patron, Meyer, is hoping to—"

"What is Mr. Meyer hoping for?"

But Carl Fügler had only stared at her with those terribly steady hazel eyes of his which took in so much, and, when they were taking in, seemed to give out nothing. "I shan't tell you. It is too ugly. Keep your innocence, Mademoiselle Pauline. It is lovely and your voice needs it all the time."

"But Mr. Meyer is very old," she had persisted. "Much older than the princess and Miss Vyvyan. What could Dr. Artz or anyone else do for him now? Why, he must be centuries older than daddy."

"Your daddy I have never seen, but I will take your word for it. Nevertheless that ugly beast Artz has shed rays of horrible hope even over Meyer."

"I can't understand."

"And I hope you never will—so long as Marakoff and I are in Zurich," Carl had said, with extraordinary grimness. "It is a great mistake, Mademoiselle Pauline, to try to understand all the hideous things of life. I know it is the fashion. We even have films shown here that—but no need to talk about them. You keep to your lark life as long as you can. It may not be so very long—" He paused and looked at her, with a strange emotional tenderness. "Life is damnably vile in many ways!" he ended, with his accustomed vehemence. "But Marakoff and I are here. That is something."

Miss Vyvyan had been Pauline's self-constituted protectress. Now apparently two men were taking her place. It all seemed rather odd to the lark. But she always preferred men, if they were nice men, even to nice women.

"But Marakoff—even he—since that horrid woman's behavior in the studio!" went on Carl.

"Even he—what? What do you mean, Mr. Fügler?"

"If he falls into Artz's net, why, then—"

"I can't understand. What do you mean?"

"Do not try to find out. It may not happen. But I am damnably afraid."

The idea of Carl Fügler being afraid of anything nearly made Pauline smile. But he looked so tremendously serious that she refrained.

Pauline was wrapped up in her music, which meant that she was also wrapped up in herself. She was really an unusual girl, for it seemed as if she had been created to sing, just to sing in a pure, clear, flexible voice full of a charm of morning, not passionate, yet moving, because in it there was a crystalline beauty that was suggestive of things unearthly. It was a voice which appealed, perhaps, more to the imagination than to the heart or the passions. Compare a Mozart aria with Isolda's death song and you have Pauline's voice compared with the voice of a dramatic soprano. Heckner had said that with time she might be an ideal Eva. Marakoff had told her that she might be an ideal Michaela, perhaps an ideal Margaret in Gounod's old "Faust." "But," he had added, "I do not know how you could bring off the final trio."

He was always drastically sincere with Pauline. As for her she did not analyze herself or her own talent. She was not in the least analytical. She just sang, sang as she felt. But she hated to be dragooned into singing in a particular way which was not her own. Nevertheless she was almost pathetically faithful in following Marakoff's advice, for he had made a tremendous impression upon her. She was not by nature dramatic. He was intensely dramatic, of drama all compact. The great difference between them impressed Pauline mightily. She thought him a genius although she had never, of course, heard him sing.

Marakoff wanted her to hear him sing, often wanted it terribly. Since she had come into his life he often ached with the desire to sing.

Both Marakoff and Carl Fügler thought of Pauline as they probably thought of no other girl or woman. Her curious natural detachment, her quiet concern with herself, her voice, her progress in singing, her indifference to the usual absurdities to which most girls attach tremendous importance, the soprano simplicity of her character—as Marakoff whimsically called it—touched and attracted them both, perhaps partly because they were both, each in his personal way, violent, passionate, dramatic, the exact reverse of Pauline. And the attraction which

both of them felt towards Pauline made each of them desire to protect her. The sound of her voice suggested above all else innocence.

These two men, perhaps prompted, though they didn't know it, by an artistic instinct, subtle and even perhaps partly selfish, wanted that innocence to be preserved. Would not contact with ugliness, with desire its ugliness, with passion its ugliness, with violent emotion its ugliness—for to most of the ardors of humanity is attached a special, as if a personal, ugliness—would not contact with these, or with any one of them, tarnish the peculiar and lovely quality of the lark's temperament, nature and voice? These men thought so. They had even spoken of it together once, when Marakoff had tackled Carl about that night expedition on the lake, and had been made to understand, by a flow of hot words and by a violent manner, convincingly sincere, that Carl felt about the lark as he, Marakoff, felt.

"And yet I believe the boy is really in love with her!" Marakoff had said to himself.

But Carl had a quality which is rarer than most of the qualities to be found in young men. He was gloriously chivalrous—and didn't know it.

Khalil Ibrahim had some excellent qualities. But he wasn't chivalrous about pretty girls, and he had no feeling whatever for magical purities. He saw in Pauline not a lark, whose special loveliness of song must be carefully preserved, that preservation beginning with great care for her nature, but a very pretty girl whose extraordinary fairness, blanched yellow hair and strange silver-gray eyes, made a tremendous appeal to his oriental darkness.

He looked upon girls and women as goods to go for, if you wanted them, as bodies to have a masculine try for. You might be refused, evaded. But your very maleness demanded that you follow after a possible prey. Also Khalil Ibrahim had in his native country come to the conviction, by contact with certain female travelers not of the most refined type, but rather adventurous, and "out to have a good time" away from all home restrictions, that white women were often regular devils under-

neath their surface of sporting calmness or casual reserve. He wasn't a youth who was subtle in the distinctions of Europe and America. He was only orientally subtle. He missed many differences which a western youth as clever as he was wouldn't have missed.

He missed the oncoming of Pauline, which Marakoff and Carl Fügler perceived. His idea in going to live at Madame Müller's *pension* was, if possible, to teach the charming girl, who in London he had hinted was seductive, some lessons which possibly—he couldn't be sure, having a native incredulity about feminine virtue—she hadn't yet mastered. If really she carried a prayer-book his pleasant mission it must be to be the Devil at her elbow.

He began carefully by being very charming to Pauline whenever he was with her; only now and then, for she was very much taken up with her studies, her visits to Marakoff's studio, her pursuit of "culture"—this really half-hearted, for Pauline had none of the enthusiasm for culture which she had for singing—her walks, her visits to the baths, and her friendly intercourse with Madame Müller, Madame Müller's delightful brother, who kept the antiquity shop, and his good-natured, lazy-minded Danish wife.

Pauline liked Khalil Ibrahim. His soft manners and gentle voice she found charming. The fact that he was an Egyptian amused her, entertained her. She knew an Egyptian boy. It was quite interesting. She supposed him to be a prince, but that supposition did not affect her attitude towards him. For Pauline was so totally out of "society" that any snobbery connected with it was not even understood by her. Really she didn't know what snobbery meant. To be with a pleasant prince was much the same to her as being with a pleasant plowboy. No doubt it was wonderful to be a prince. The elderly ladies in the *pension* seemed to think so. But men, to Pauline, were just men, either kind and attractive or not. Khalil was kind and attractive, and so she liked him. But to her he meant much less than Marakoff meant, much less than Carl Fügler.

At the beginning of October something happened which

caused a great deal of talk in the *pension*. Princess Teresco emerged from the *clinique* behind the Dolder convalescent after her operation by Dr. Artz, the operation which had been preceded by *piqûres,* such as Miss Vyvyan was now, though unknown to the *pension,* undergoing.

She came back to the *pension* to "pack up." That was understood, and Madame Müller had spoken of it and of looking for someone to take the princess's rooms, which were by far her best. The *pension* was grieved at the idea of losing a Roumanian princess, but luckily the Egyptian prince was there to make good the loss. And a "highness" was even more of an asset than a *"grande dame"* with shifty light eyes. So the *pension* resigned itself and prepared to take a cordial, if not an affectionate, farewell of its woman in white.

The princess arrived from the *clinique*. She was looking, all thought, remarkably well after her seclusion, "younger than ever." (This meant really young for her age, which not even the elderly women suspected to be far on in the fifties.) But the most remarkable thing about her was the amazing access of animal vitality which seemed to be really boiling up in her. She had always struck them as restless. But now there was something really peculiar, startling almost, in the suggestion of physical and mental animation which came from her, seemed almost to be pouring out of her over the *pension*. If she had been like a lamp she was now like a lamp that flared.

On the evening of her return she came in to dinner rather late. As usual she was dressed in white. In going to her table she passed by the table at which Khalil Ibrahim was dining. He looked up at her. She went by quickly, without seeming to notice him. But before sitting down to dinner she visited the table where Madame Müller always sat, and after saying something to her about arrangements for departure, added, "Who is that dark young man?"

"Prince Khalil Ibrahim," replied Madame Müller. "He is studying at the university. An Egyptian from Cairo."

"I like Egyptians. You might present him to me after dinner."

That evening Khalil took coffee in the princess's sitting-room, and on the following day the *pension* was gratified to hear from Madame Müller that the princess had changed her mind, and was staying on for the present.

XXII

ALTHOUGH September had given place to a golden October, and the mellow stillness of autumn, brooding reflectively in its robe of glory, had softly, even stealthily, pushed out of the world the radiant gaiety of summer, Leon Meyer was still staying on in his rooms at the Baur-au-Lac. He had also been twice to the *pension* and had flattered Madame Müller, who knew of his fame in finance, by taking tea with her and Pauline. On these occasions his manner had been patriarchal. She congratulated Pauline on her luck in having found such a protector. "Has he any children?" she asked.

"Oh no!" Pauline replied, with her delicious simplicity. "He has never been married."

"Dear me! I suppose he does not care for women then. Or perhaps he has been disappointed."

"I don't know," said Pauline.

"He has extraordinary eyes. Sometimes they are like balls of fire."

"Are they?"

"Dear child! You are so wrapped up in your music that there are lots of things you don't notice. You are just the opposite of the princess. She notices everything."

"She seems to dislike me more than ever since her operation," Pauline observed tranquilly.

"Don't you know why that is?"

"No. Do you?"

But Madame Müller only smiled at her affectionately and said, musingly, "Some day I suppose you will wake up."

"But I think I am pretty wide awake now," Pauline said on a note of protest. "I know just what I want."

"And what is that?"

"But you know! I want to be a successful opera singer."

"Is that all?"

"It seems to me plenty. Dear Madame Müller, you can't have much idea of the difficulties I have to get over in my art."

"But the difficulties in your life, my child!"

"Child! I'm twenty! What difficulties?"

"Perhaps God will show you," said Madame Müller rather sadly. Although she looked unusually modern, and even smart, for the keeper of a Swiss *pension,* she still had a strong sense of religion, was a Catholic and went regularly to Mass.

"God!" said Pauline, looking slightly embarrassed at the turn the conversation was taking. "Anyhow I have friends who will help me through them."

"Yes?"

"Mr. Marakoff for one; and Carl Fügler. He is not savage as I once thought. He is really kind."

"Yes, he is. And you have Mr. Meyer, too."

"Oh—yes. But I don't think I should care to go to him in a difficulty."

"No?"

"No, I don't think so."

"And then there is Miss Vyvyan."

"She has changed towards me."

"I wonder why that is," said Madame Müller, in her musing voice.

"And now I scarcely ever see her."

"No, she doesn't come here. Why is it?"

"Perhaps she isn't well. She is being treated by Dr. Artz." The girl paused, then added with, for her, unusual significance, "But that mayn't be because she is ill."

"Mr. Meyer is being treated by Dr. Artz, too," said Madame Müller rather abruptly.

"Is he really? Carl Fügler said—" She stopped. Madame

Müller, noticing the girl's obvious wish not to say what she had been about to say, did not ask what it was. "You like Dr. Artz, don't you?" said Pauline, after the silence.

"Yes. He is nice to me, and has sent several people here, as you know. And—he is a very clever man."

"Some people dislike him very much."

"All very clever people are disliked by some people. And Dr. Artz does not always go out of his way to make friends. Better to judge for yourself."

"I don't dislike him. But I hardly know him. He doesn't take much notice of me."

"Doesn't he?" said Madame Müller. And a slight touch of something like sarcasm just then crept into her voice.

"No. He is so busy. And then I'm so young compared with him. He is Miss Vyvyan's friend, not mine."

"Ah!"

"Did you ever meet his wives?"

"I met the last one."

"I can hardly believe he's been married three times. Was she pretty?"

"Lovely."

"Oh, how extraordinary!"

"Why?"

"He's so dreadfully ugly."

"It is not always looks by which a man wins women."

"But there must be something. I shouldn't call Mr. Marakoff good-looking exactly—but I can quite imagine a woman falling in love with him."

"Have you?" said Madame Müller lightly.

"I! Of course not. He is my master. Why, he must be over forty! I do *wish* I had heard him sing. D'you know that I believe Dr. Artz has told him he could bring back his voice."

"If he did, that would be a triumph indeed."

"Carl Fügler says it's impossible."

"Youth giving its judgment!" said Madame Müller.

And then the conversation was interrupted by the advent of the *pension* cook.

The day after this conversation Pauline received an unexpected invitation. It was from Meyer, asking her to "honor" him by coming to tea with him at the Baur-au-Lac. The note he sent was, she thought, rather formal.

Grand Hotel Baur-au-Lac
Zurich, Oct. 7th, 19—.

Dear Miss Iselle:

I should be much pleased if you would honor me by having tea with me here tomorrow at four o'clock. Since we saw the Marie Antoinette table together we have had no private conversation. And I am anxious to know whether you are satisfied with your stay here and whether your advance in singing has come up to your expectations.

Believe me
Yours sincerely
Leon Meyer.

The allusion to the table made Pauline think of the pressure of Meyer's hand on her elbow, and remember one or two moments of slight uneasiness which she had had in Carlton House Terrace. That uneasiness had not returned to her here in Zurich. She had no hesitation in accepting the invitation. But when she mentioned it and her acceptance of it to Carl Fügler, as they were leaving Marakoff's studio after a joint lesson on the morning of the eighth, she was surprised by the sudden change in his expression. He had been laughing, looking like a jovial boy. Now he had what she called his "thunder look."

"Are you going?" he said.

"Of course."

"Alone?"

"Yes. Why not? Whom should I take with me?"

"I don't know—now Miss Vyvyan— What a pity that is!"

"What is?"

"Oh, never mind! It's done now. I met her yesterday. She stopped me on the promenade by the lake. She seemed eager

to make it up. I walked with her for a while. Have you seen her lately?"

"No, I haven't."

"She's a good deal changed, I think," he said, rather enigmatically. "There's no doubt that Dr. Artz—" He broke off, and looked at her strangely.

"What is it?" she asked.

"You are going to Meyer. And you've never been to me."

"But I have been—to your mother's house."

"That doesn't count. You have never been to me as you are going to Meyer."

"But how could I? You don't live in a hotel!"

"But I have bachelor quarters."

"D'you mean your hut at the Zurichberg?"

"Hut, indeed! I call it a house."

"But you have never asked me there."

"No; I have never asked you." He was silent, staring at her in his characteristic, tremendously steady way. At last he said: "I ask you now. If you go to Meyer you ought to come to me."

"But you're young!" said Pauline, smiling though as she said it. "And Mr. Meyer is old."

"Old men are sometimes more dangerous than young men."

"Dangerous? What nonsense!"

"You will come then to my house, not my hut, in the Naturheil-Verein."

"Yes, if you ask me."

"Be sure I shall. And if you go alone to Meyer you must come alone to me."

"I will," said Pauline, without hesitation.

"You are going to Meyer today."

"Yes, at four this afternoon."

"Come to me tomorrow at the same time. Will you?"

"Yes."

At ten minutes to four on the following day Carl was at the entrance to the Naturheil-Verein, a large plot of land on the top of the Zurichberg close to the big sunbath and

restaurant. This plot, which is divided into two parts by a walk, is a maze of one-roomed houses, or huts, separated by wire fences from the public pathway. Each hut stands in its small piece of garden. The owners of these huts—for each of which a very small yearly rent is paid, in some cases not as much as a hundred Swiss francs yearly—are, it seems, all active and efficient gardeners, for the whole place is a maze of flowering bushes and of many-colored flowers growing in pots or in window troughs.

Here in the hot summer weather women may be seen wearing scanty bathing dresses, men tending their plots of ground in exiguous bathing drawers or white shorts, small children playing with little or nothing on.

But now it was autumn, and though the weather was glorious the summer-nakedness had greatly diminished, though a few hardy spirits, enclosed in well-seasoned and well-sunned bodies, still wandered about, or sat at their doors, in something approaching the savage state.

Carl was wearing an open shirt with no tie, a pair of gray flannel trousers fastened round his narrow waist by a brown leather belt, white canvas shoes. His strong, springy auburn mop was exposed to the rays of the autumn sun. His shirt sleeves were rolled above his elbows.

Just after four his quick ears caught the sound of an approaching tram in the distance, and immediately he started sprinting down the road, for there was a stopping place a little way off, none opposite to the Naturheil-Verein.

As he had hoped Pauline was in the tram, and on seeing him she got out. She was wearing a very pale shell-pink dress which he had never seen her in before, a short and loose shell-pink coat, and a little black hat, which covered her still uncut hair.

Carl was so delighted to see her that in the first moment of meeting he didn't notice any change in her. So strong was his mood that perhaps he supposed it must be hers, too, a mood of joy, of joyous expectation. But by the time they had walked up the road and were turning to the right to enter the Naturheil-Verein he had realized something.

"What is the matter, Pauline?" he said.

"Nothing. Oh, what dear little huts!"

"Now, now, huts again! We call them houses here!"

"I mean houses. Which is yours?"

"The prettiest one. It is a little farther along. We can see it from here."

"Which one?"

"But I told you—the prettiest. Surely you can tell."

After a moment she said: "Is it the one on the left, a little way back, the white and green one with all those red flowers in the window-boxes?

"Of course it is." In a moment they were moving in the seemingly wild but really well-ordered jungle and came to Carl's door.

"It *is* pretty!" said Pauline. "I have never seen anything like this before." But there was no light of joy in her singer's voice, and Carl's eyes became sternly observant.

Inside the white and green "house" was one good-sized room, with a tiny kitchen partitioned off from it. The wooden walls of this room were covered with a dull gold, rough-looking paper. Carl wasn't fond of "smoothness," a word of condemnation in his mouth. In a corner was a writing-table of cherry wood that looked old, but that was a beautifully made copy of a table of Voltaire's from the clever hands of Madame Müller's brother, Herr Weber. Before it stood a rustic chair also made by Herr Weber. Above it, placed so that it exactly faced any writer seated at the table, was a black-framed plaque of Dante, carved beautifully in wood, and shown in profile. Beneath it in large wooden letters was the name "Dante."

There was a tea table laid for two people, with blue and white china, and cakes, and four little vases of late pink roses at the four corners.

So far so good! And Pauline looked round feeling something of harmony in the room. But suddenly she exclaimed, "Oh!" on a startled note. She had seen on the wall opposite to the Voltaire table three pictures hanging side by side, three terrors. One was a frightful clergyman, with a round white

collar and the bulldog face of a ferocious humbug; the second was a man apparently far gone in drunkenness, with watery eyes full of liquor and life, and a long red snout of a nose. And the third—the third was Dr. Artz. Not as he was in life but as Carl Fügler felt him to be, Dr. Artz with Carl's notion of his mind, his character, his secret intentions and desires, thrust into the light of day, exposed virulently by his physical envelop.

"Who did those?"

"I did them." Pauline looked at Carl with eyes that were surely frightened. "Don't you like them?"

"But that one—is it meant for Dr. Artz?"

"It *is* Dr. Artz. Now I will fetch the tea. Do please sit down, Pauline."

He went away behind the partition. But Pauline remained standing in front of Dr. Artz. And the cloud Carl had already noticed on her fair face deepened. The lark was blotted out by that cloud. Its singing was meant for the blue, and that day the blue was not there.

Carl was painfully conscious of this when they were having tea together. They two were alone in his house up there in the Zurichberg, surrounded with silence and flowers, and he was host to Pauline; and yet there was constraint, almost sorrow, between them, with them. He found Pauline altered.

"Did you have a nice time with Meyer yesterday?" he presently asked. For long he had avoided asking that question.

"He was very kind."

"Yes?" Pauline was silent. "I wish you would take off your hat," said Carl. "I love to look at your hair." She took off the little black hat. "Thank you. But—Pauline, what is the matter?" Directly she took off her hat he seemed to realize more sharply the change in her.

She did not answer "Nothing" as so many girls probably would have done. Such an answer wouldn't have been in Pauline's character. Nor did she say, "Why do you ask?" Pauline wasn't conventional. She looked at Carl, and seemed to hesitate. Then she said:

"Have I ever seemed to you a horrid girl?"

"Horrid—you! Of course not."

"I'm glad," she said, simply. Then she added unexpectedly, "I nearly didn't come here today. But I'm glad I did come."

He felt her now as a startled thing, as a wounded thing. "What has happened?" he exclaimed, ferociously. "What has— You do not mean to say that—" He hesitated; he didn't know how to put it. He stared at Pauline with the extraordinary fixed gaze which he was totally unconscious of. The fair girl grew slowly red under his eyes. "Cannot you tell me, Pauline?"

"No."

"And I must not ask anything?"

"No; you'd better not."

When she said that he felt that she really wanted to tell him—something, and he remembered his maleness and his youth.

"Perhaps— Could you tell Marakoff?"

"Oh no—no! I would rather tell you than him." She looked down. Her face was still strongly flushed. "I don't know what I ought to do," she said. And then after a long pause she added, almost in a whisper, "Mr. Meyer is paying for me."

"Your lessons with Marakoff, you mean."

"The *pension,* everything—in Zurich."

There was a long silence. It was broken by Pauline, and with words, and more especially with a manner, that surprised him, that caused him uneasiness.

"I can't give up my lessons with Mr. Marakoff," she said. "I can't leave here. I won't." There was an extraordinary decision in her voice and manner. He had to realize that when there was any question of her singing there was an immense native obstinacy in her. "I shall go on here, whatever happens."

Carl was disconcerted by the decision in her voice and her manner, which seemed to him hard, unlike Pauline, though he had realized long ago the soft obstinacy of her and had loved it. "Can I help you in any way?" he said, with much less than his usual boldness of manner.

"No, I don't think you can. No, you can't."

After another long pause of deep thought and fixed gazing, Carl said, "Could you go to Miss Vyvyan?"

"No—no."

"Why not? I know you and she are not—"

"No, I couldn't." And then she added, with a significance which startled him and made him realize very strongly the mystery which may lie in apparent, or indeed in very real, simplicity. "She is going to Dr. Artz, too."

And as she said that her silver-gray eyes went to the caricature of Dr. Artz that was hanging on the pale golden wall.

XXIII

THERE had been no more talk between Pauline and Carl of Dr. Artz that day. Soon they had left the Naturheil-Verein and walked home down the hill. And in going they had talked very little. Carl's brain had been heavy with thought. He was one who could sink deep down in thought. His mind was essentially a powerful thinking machine.

Miss Vyvyan was ruled out as a helper in this great difficulty. Pauline had refused her. And she was right, he believed. His last meeting with Miss Vyvyan had impressed him unfavorably. There had been an atmosphere of eagerness, of pressing excitement about her that—he hadn't liked it; he hadn't, somehow, trusted it. It was as if in some as yet to him rather obscure way, her nature, her character—how give a name to it?—had altered. He hadn't felt at ease with her.

Madame Müller? But she was indebted to Dr. Artz. She was a nice woman, intelligent, a good sort, too, but she had to make a living, and Dr. Artz sent her boarders. Otherwise, perhaps, Madame Müller might have been of some use.

There remained Marakoff. Carl knew the big Russian's almost tender and protective care for Pauline. He made no pretense to be, or ever to have been, a saint. His life, indeed,

as most people knew, had been extremely irregular. But Carl knew well that he had a very special sense of his duty not only to Pauline, the girl, but to Pauline, the lark, the singing bird. There was in it something almost mystical and highly imaginative. The voice, the voice that he now affirmed would some day sing Mozart as Mozart wasn't often sung, must not be tarnished. Apparently he held a perhaps strange conviction that anything ugly or horrible which happened to Pauline would happen also to her voice.

Another thing pushed him toward Marakoff. It was this: he was afraid for Marakoff with Dr. Artz. If he could but rouse in Marakoff something of the hot anger and disgust he felt towards Dr. Artz surely Marakoff would never become one of "the Artz crowd" which he held in such sovereign disdain.

Finally he resolved to unburden a part at least of his heart to his maestro under a strict pledge of secrecy.

After his lesson on the following day, before the next pupil came, he asked Marakoff whether he might come round to his flat any time as he wanted to have a private talk—not about singing.

"Of course—come! But what an air you have, Testa Dura! It is something tremendous then that you have to say to me?"

"It is something serious, maestro. And it is something I know you will keep secret."

Just then there was a knock at the door.

"It is—it has to do with Mademoiselle Pauline?"

"Yes."

"Ah!" The Russian's slanting eyes became suddenly piercing. "Ah! Come tonight—at nine." Then lifting his slightly hoarse, but still carrying voice, he exclaimed, *"Herein!"*

Whereupon a young German bass opened the door and walked in energetically, carrying a big roll of music.

Marakoff lived in an apartment on the third floor of a house in Gloriastrasse. It contained only a bedroom and sitting-room for Marakoff, a tiny kitchen, a bathroom and lavatory, and a bedroom for Marakoff's Russian man servant. This

servant was a massive pale man of fifty-five, a native of Odessa, and had been with Marakoff for twenty-five years.

That same night at nine Petsky opened the door of the little apartment to Carl and begged him, with a broad smile, to come in. Then, taking Carl's stick—he had no hat—Petsky opened the sitting-room door and showed Carl into a cloud of smoke which contained Marakoff and Dr. Artz, who were smoking enormous pipes stuffed with very strong tobacco and had glasses of beer on a table beside them.

Carl was so astonished, so dismayed even, at the sight of Artz, that he stood still in the doorway and in spite of Marakoff's cordial, "Come into my Swiss palace, *mein lieber Carl!*" uttered rather hoarsely out of the midst of the smoke cloud, didn't take a step forward.

"Maestro, I—I thought you were alone!" he almost stammered, for once losing his trenchantly decisive manner. "I will not disturb you. I will come back another time."

"I am going, Herr Fügler," said Dr. Artz. "This pipe finished—I go." He picked up his beer. It struck Carl that there was a sound of almost unctuous satisfaction in his guttural voice. Surely, too, his small black eyes gleamed with a complacency which Carl, in his enmity, thought of as "greasy."

"Sit down, old Carl," said Marakoff. "Sergei—" He spoke to the servant in liquid Russian. "You shall have beer and a pipe." Marakoff pushed a small Swiss armchair over the light-colored parquet.

"Well—thank you, maestro," said Carl grimly. And with a hostile and suspicious glance at Dr. Artz, he sat down.

Petsky came back with a tankard of beer and a pipe. Carl was a valiant beer-drinker, also a smoker. He could hold his own with the best at the Bellevue Bar, and was the most genial of boon companions, tremendously liked by men. But tonight he was in no mood to be gay. He wanted Artz to go, and to go as soon as possible. So he sat in grim silence smoking and drinking, and Marakoff let him alone—oddly. Oddly, for it was not Marakoff's way to allow any mood of another to be imposed upon him. But tonight, while Artz seemed unusually

complacent, even more than complacent, triumphant in some curious, perhaps intentionally subdued and half secret way, Marakoff, once Carl had settled down in the tobacco smoke, seemed less easy than usual. It seemed to Carl that he was even slightly self-conscious. And this was not far from incredible, for in all his dealings with Marakoff Carl had never till this moment detected a trace of self-consciousness in him. But tonight surely he was anxious under the uncompromising eyes of his pupil.

Dr. Artz did most of the talking. Carl had the impression that the subject of conversation between the two men had been abruptly changed on his entrance. Artz now made it music. Had it been medicine a minute ago?

Artz's enthusiasm for music was genuine, rang true. Even Carl Fügler felt that, and he secretly agreed with much that Artz said about chamber music being the best basis on which to found an absolutely pure taste, unmuddled by the exaggerations of opera or the nerve-racking sensationalism of much modern orchestral music.

"It is difficult to be vulgar only with strings," he remarked.

"Some people can be vulgar with anything," said Carl savagely out of the smoke. "A penny whistle would serve them as well as a trombone."

"Ah! My instrument is the second violin in a string quartet."

"I was not alluding to you, Herr Doktor."

"Then you do not agree with me?"

Yes, the smile on his face tonight was a greasy smile!

"I do not bother about agreeing with anybody. I think things out for myself."

"And you manage to agree with yourself always?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"Do you never feel within you a man who asserts and another man who doubts the assertion?"

"Well, I am waiting."

"For instance, the one man may say, 'I am perfectly well.' Does not the other sometimes say, 'I wonder if I *am* perfectly

well?' Or the one may say, 'I feel as young as ever I did.' May not the other man say"—he glanced at Marakoff sprawling in the chair opposite to him, pale, ravaged, yet powerful—"say, 'Am I not beginning to feel—not old, to be sure, oh no!—but to feel different?' Ah—ha!"

"I do not know anything about feeling old," Carl said, contemptuously.

"No. That is all to come."

"And when it does come I shall face it like a man, not try to run away from it, or to get round it, like a lot of credulous fools do today."

"Is it credulous to believe in a scientific truth?"

"It is credulous to think that nature can be interfered with successfully." And then Carl, by this time heated up, and reckless because of a dread creeping in him, not for himself but for another, burst forth into an eloquent diatribe on the dictates of nature and the puny protests of man. He gesticulated in the smoke. His eyes blazed. His bronzed face grew fiery red. There were moments when he looked like a vehement actor in some big scene on the stage. Dr. Artz watched him with a sort of sardonic blandness.

At last Carl stopped with a final, "Nature has to have her way, and the man who tries to interfere with her is a fool, a maniac, a—a—he is a blasphemer against the law!" His raised voice was almost a shout.

Dr. Artz turned to Marakoff. "What vitality!" was his comment, uttered in a tone of genuine admiration.

Carl looked angrily disconcerted. "I mean every word of it," he said. "Every word!"

"Of course you do," said Dr. Artz, "and I will not attempt to refute it. What is the good of bringing a rapier against the bludgeon of youth? Ah, you are healthy!" He got up and knocked out his pipe. He was looking at Marakoff. "You are strong. The hot blood flows in *your* veins. You are a mass of vitality and without vitality life is not *life*. Well, you may rail as much as you please, but I tell you I can give vitality. I cannot make a man of sixty be twenty, or a woman of fifty

be a girl, like, for instance, your friend, Miss Iselle, who had tea with you yesterday in your hut in the Naturheil-Verein. But I can charge the human body with vitality, and make it keep pace with its companion. For have you not noticed, you who see so much with your steady, savage young eyes, that often the nature, mind, soul, temperament—call it as you choose, or think of all together making as it were one—are still full of fire when the body is losing, or has lost, all its spring? Now good night, Friend Marakoff. I, too, have said some words, though not nearly so many as Herr Fügler. Good night also to you, Herr Fügler."

And then he opened the door and went out with his heavy tread, showing his deeply hollowed back to them. The projecting frontal part of him seemed to throw back his head, and even looked at from behind it suggested both brains and will-power.

When the door shut behind him, Marakoff said: "So Mademoiselle l'Alouette has been with you in the Naturheil-Verein!"

"Yes, I was going to tell you. But how did Artz know? Cannot one take a step in Zurich without his damned distortion of a shadow slipping after one?"

"What is it about our Pauline? But perhaps I know."

"Impossible! Or"—he hesitated—"perhaps it—no, you do not know surely."

"Tell me, and we shall see."

"Meyer pays for her. But of course you know that."

"Meyer! Ah—what about Meyer?"

"You did not think it was Meyer I had to speak about then?"

"Perhaps not. Go on, Testa Dura."

"I asked Pauline to come to tea at the Naturheil-Verein because she accepted an invitation to go to tea with Meyer at the Baur-au-Lac. I did not see why she should go to him and not come to me."

"You were jealous of Meyer?"

"Jealous!" Carl flamed. "Of an old wreck like that! But Artz is tinkering at him, your friend Dr. Artz. Artz is changing old Meyer into a dangerous monster."

"A dangerous monster! And to whom is this old monster dangerous?"

"To Pauline."

"You say that Meyer—you dare to tell me that Meyer has done harm to Pauline?" As if instinctively Marakoff got up out of his chair on the last words, like a man intending to do something tremendously definite. He towered over Carl and looked down on him with widely opened eyes that were now overwhelmingly expressive. "You say that Meyer—"

"No—no! If it were so what would be the use of my coming to you? What would be the good of doing *anything?*"

"Then what is it?"

"Please, maestro, do not stand over me like that. You do not know what you look like."

"What does it matter how I look? Go on!"

"No—sit down. I want to consult you."

After a pause in which Marakoff still towered over Carl he said, "Well then—go on! I will sit again." And he sank heavily into his chair with his eyes fixed on Carl.

"When Pauline came to the Naturheil-Verein—I met her near the entrance—I saw she was changed."

"Changed!"

"She was all clouded over. Something had happened. I knew it. And she acknowledged it."

"What had happened?"

"She did not tell me what happened. But it was something to do with Meyer and it happened when she visited Meyer at the Baur-au-Lac."

"Go—*on!*" Marakoff's eyes seemed to menace even Carl, including him unconsciously in a world that deserved menace.

Carl told him of the conversation in the hut among the flowers. Marakoff listened with profound attention.

"But the worst of it all is this," Carl said finally. And then he spoke of Pauline's strange declaration, strange because so hard, so unyielding, and suggestive surely of abominable possibilities. "What do you think of that, maestro? And her face was not a bit like the girl we thought we knew. There is,

there must be, another Pauline whom we have never met. And—and I am afraid of her."

Marakoff again got up. His face had changed. It was now less obviously dramatic than sternly thoughtful. "The lark—" he said. "I was not wrong at the beginning. When Artz told me in Huguenin's I was not wrong."

"Wrong? What about?"

"He told me that Meyer was the lark's patron. And at once I guessed. But since Meyer has been here I have not seen —he has been careful."

He moved as if to walk up and down in the small Swiss room, but was at once hampered by the Zurich furniture and gave it up with a gusty exclamation.

"Ah! Here there is no space! *Why* do I live like this, and even then can hardly pay? But I will teach her for nothing. Yes, I will teach her, till she is ready to sing Mozart properly, beautifully, as it should be sung, for nothing."

He sat down again and leaned forward to Carl. "Carl, my boy," he said abruptly. "You love Pauline!" There was no question in his voice—only statement.

Carl reddened up to his bumpy forehead, up to the point of his auburn hair. "I do not think—I have not—what do you mean, maestro? I have never—"

"Perhaps you did not know it. But I know it. So it is. But"—he laid a big hand on Carl's arm—"Pauline does not love you. She does not love anyone. Do you know what is peculiar in our lark? It is this, that till now she is nothing more than a singing bird. Put her in a cage, and if she can but sing and be heard singing she will be happy—like the canary. She does not really love anyone. Can a bird really love? Anyhow not as you and I. We must not ask for that, we must not expect it. But though we must not expect love from a lark we must not let what I call the larkness of her be destroyed by Meyer, or by anyone. I told Artz in Huguenin's that if she *was* a lark I would protect her voice."

"But"—Carl now spoke with his usual blazing eagerness— "can not you see that it is Artz who is bringing about all this

vileness? Meyer has been his patient here, just as Miss Vyvyan has, and Princess Teresco. And now that horrible old beast—and God knows where it will end. Artz begins with *piqûres*. But it ends in an operation, and then out they come from his *clinique* ready for any abomination."

"How do you know that?"

"I know two fellows, students who are in the Pension Müller. There is an Egyptian there. They call him Prince Khalíl Ibrahim. The princess, as they call her, has fastened on him with claws and beak like an eagle, they say, since she came out of Artz's *clinique*."

"Ah!" said Marakoff, "and the other? Miss Vyvyan?"

Again Carl, strangely, grew red. "Oh—she! I do not know anything much about her. She has had no operation yet so far as I know."

"And she will have one?"

"Do not ask *me* Dr. Artz's secrets, maestro. I have never asked one of you."

"Of me? What secret of Artz should I know?"

But Carl didn't answer that. And Marakoff did not persist, was, perhaps, glad not to persist. For as no answer came quickly he added:

"You are not quite fair to Artz, Testa Dura. You see him as villain. I see him as one with, perhaps, not many scruples, who wishes to arrive, and will take the shortest way he can find. His short way—we can see it."

"Do not you make it shorter, maestro!"

Marakoff looked disconcerted by this abrupt outburst, which was delivered with all Carl's usual unrelenting force. But he made no rejoinder, only stretched out a surely embarrassed hand to the tobacco tin and began to fill his big pipe. When it was filled he said: "We have left the lark. I have said that I will teach her for nothing."

"You are going to tell Meyer that?"

"Yes, I will tell him."

"You will not give him the reason?"

"Naturally not."

"But—she told me—he pays for the *pension*. He pays everything for her here."

"Ah, is it so?" Marakoff shrugged his broad shoulders. "I can teach for nothing. But I cannot pay for anything. I have no money. God, if I could only sing again! Then—then the money would come! Why, think, Carl, if I could sing as I sang in 1914 just before the war, from gramophone records alone I could make thousands a year. To pay everything for the lark would mean nothing to me. But I have sold all, parted with everything. Nothing is left."

Suddenly he fell into a heavy, brooding silence, staring at the pale parquet of the small, tasteless room with eyes that were horribly sad.

Carl wanted to make a great protest but, looking at that brooding face, he dared not.

"Then what are we to do, maestro?" he said, at last.

"I do not know. I do not know."

"Could—could I manage to pay?"

"How can the lark take money from you?"

"Somehow I might—"

"No, no! Impossible! You are a boy to think of it."

"Damn being a boy!" almost shouted Carl. He sprang up. "Something has got to be done!"

"Perhaps—something will be done," said Marakoff, with heavy significance.

"What?" exclaimed Carl.

But Marakoff did not answer. And Carl left his maestro that night with a secret dread lest by the revelation he had made he had brought Marakoff to an ugly decision, which possibly but for him might not have been taken.

"Am I a damnable blunderer?" he said to himself desperately. And out in the night, as he walked towards the Parade Platz, he seemed to see Dr. Artz smiling.

But his preoccupation about Dr. Artz, great though it was, was almost swallowed up by another preoccupation. His maestro's abrupt statement to him that he loved Pauline seemed to have revealed to him a truth that till then he had not

acknowledged to himself even if he had known it. "You love Pauline."

The silent answer of this being to that was: "Yes, it is true. I do love Pauline."

Confronted with that tremendous fact what did anything unconnected with Pauline really matter to him? Even his beloved maestro was diminished by the sudden towering up of Pauline as a factor in his life.

But she didn't love him. Marakoff had said that, too, and again Carl's brain and heart had assented.

Pauline was intensely woman, not woman of today, or—reaching forward with conscious daring—of tomorrow, but just eternal woman. But nevertheless she had her mystery. With all her simplicity, her total lack of "knowingness," she contained within her a way of escape. And she had meanings that were entirely her own and that perhaps no man would be able to oppose.

The singing bird was driven, compelled by her nature. And the deeps of nature refuse the blundering offices of man.

Pauline—Pauline!

Marakoff had told Carl that Carl loved her.

And it was true.

XXIV

MARAKOFF was by nature a decisive man. He knew how to mean a thing and he knew how to come at the thing he meant. But he was a Russian and there were times when he was beset by a demon of indecision. And then he fell into melancholy. And his melancholy was deep and sometimes approached despair.

In Zurich, though his naturally great vitality, amounting to exuberance, helped him to put a very brave face on his tragedy, he often felt alone in a way that isn't good for a man. He seldom spoke of what he had lost. But he had had

many possessions: a beautiful house in Petersburg, a villa in the Crimea, collections, horses, a big fortune—unfortunately invested in Russia. All these, the things he had acquired by his own efforts, were gone from him. But, strangely, he had never felt so angrily his losses as now when he couldn't afford to pay for the lark's life in Zurich.

He felt humiliated by the inability imposed on him. And being humiliated he sank deep into one of his fits of melancholy. His pupils were almost alarmed by it. Their lessons were no longer inspiring. He seemed to have suddenly lost interest in them. He was even irritable in his dejection. Pauline was absolutely frightened by him.

Before leaving the apartment Carl had exacted a promise of secrecy about what he had told from Marakoff and Marakoff had given a promise. He kept it. But his behavior to Pauline was so peculiar that she was seriously disturbed by it.

His eyes were often fixed on her and seemed to be demanding of her the complete revelation of every secret of her nature. And she had lost something of her unconscious simplicity. Constraint grew up between them.

A week passed before Marakoff said anything to Pauline about the money matter connected with her musical education. Then, when an unsatisfactory lesson was finished and she was preparing to leave the studio, he said abruptly, "Wait a minute, please."

"Yes, maestro?" said Pauline.

"You are like me, are you not? You are poor?"

"Yes, I am."

"I receive the money for the lessons I give you from a bank in London, the Meyer bank. It is paid monthly to me direct."

"Yes," said Pauline, looking very uncomfortable and beginning to flush in her childish way.

"Tell me something!" His eyes became piercing. "Are you proud—like me?"

"Proud?"

He didn't wait for her to say yes or no, but continued, "Mr. Meyer pays for your lessons."

"Yes."

"And because of that now and then he thinks he has a right to interfere in your education."

"Does he?" said Pauline, with genuine surprise.

"I am an independent man. I like my own way. Suppose I were to give you lessons for nothing?"

"Oh—maestro!"

"Then I could have my own way with you entirely."

"But you couldn't—I couldn't possibly—"

"Prouder with me than you are with Meyer. Is it so?"

"But Mr. Meyer is enormously rich."

"And I am enormously poor. But this would be the way. I believe in your future if I can carry on your singer's education entirely in my own manner. I will make you sing in a very personal way, personal to you. Your appearance, your voice, your manner of singing—they all must blend into a perfect harmony. Then you will make much money. From that money, when you get it, will you pay me the bill for all the singing lessons I shall give you from now?"

"Yes, yes! Of course I will!" exclaimed Pauline, with an intensity he had never heard from her before.

"Then that is how it must be."

"But Mr. Meyer? What will—"

"I will see him about it. To tell the truth I am very tired of his trying to interfere in my ways with you, my musical ways."

"To tell the lie!" he corrected himself, as soon as Pauline had gone.

But there was still the rest of her Zurich life to be paid for.

Marakoff's manner had been so convincing, and Pauline was so well aware of his determination to be the sole arbiter of his pupils' musical destiny, that she did not suspect Carl Fügler's betrayal of confidence. She went away from the studio delighted with the turn things were taking. But she wondered very much what Mr. Meyer would say to the proposed new arrangement.

Marakoff wondered too. But the indecision he was a prey to was not about Meyer.

The question that was troubling him was one that lay solely between Artz and himself. If he agreed to something that Artz wished it was possible that he might presently be in a position to release the lark entirely from the bondage of money which still laid her under an obligation to Meyer. But if Artz were as vile, as unscrupulously vile as he now almost believed, were a man who used an innocent and very young girl as a bait to draw the famous old Jew, Meyer, into his *clinique* behind the Dolder, could he also give himself up to Artz? He felt a sensation of loathing for Artz, which perhaps more than matched Carl Fügler's. Yet he was tempted—how he was tempted! Hence his melancholy, his irritability, the moodiness which troubled his pupils.

One thing, however, he felt quite decisive about. He had made what was practically a promise to Pauline. She was expecting him to fulfil it. He did not know what he was going to say to Meyer. He wasn't the type of man who carefully thinks out a scheme. He was impulsive, often a haphazard man. But he would announce to Meyer in some way which would occur to him on the spur of the moment that he meant henceforth to give the child lessons for nothing. And Meyer might protest as much as he chose. That should alter nothing. As he, Marakoff, intended, so it should be.

He went in an afternoon hour, rather late, to the Baur-au-Lac and asked to see Meyer.

"Monsieur Meyer has left, monsieur," said the concierge from his bureau.

The big Russian stared in amazement. "Left! Gone back to England?"

"Oh, no, monsieur. Monsieur Meyer is unwell and left this morning for the *clinique* of Dr. Artz. Behind the Dolder, monsieur."

"I know where the *clinique is*. You need not tell me that!" growled Marakoff, frightening the man with his long, slanting eyes. "Is he coming back?"

"I believe so, monsieur. But I could not say when. He still keeps on his rooms. But I believe he is away for some time."

"Ah!!"

"His valet gave me to understand that Monsieur Meyer is obliged to undergo an operation, monsieur."

Marakoff stood for a moment staring hard at the man. Then he turned and walked out of the hotel. So—Meyer was going to leave nothing to chance. He was going through with it to the bitter end. Marakoff saw him coming out of the *clinique* made dangerous, disgustingly dangerous, by Artz.

At that moment he shared fully all Carl Fügler's feeling about Artz. He saw Artz as a menace. And yet—and yet! There was the chance, the great chance. Could he give it up? His finer man, the sensitive man who had once sung exquisitely, the man who instinctively wished to protect the lark, felt repulsion from Artz. And the egoist in him, that man in the human being who is forever brutally busy with his own selfish interests, who cannot get away from himself, was allured by Artz. And now that man had found a reason which coated his egoism with a shining varnish of altruism.

If he trusted himself to Artz, and if Artz succeeded with him—and Artz seemed quite sure about that—he would have money once more. And then he would entirely release Pauline from her money bondage to the old brute who was now in the *clinique*. He had a motive which wasn't selfish to push him in the direction of Artz.

Whether Dr. Artz guessed—he often seemed to have a sixth sense—that Marakoff was now trembling on the very brink of a decision that was of importance to him, or not, he didn't leave Marakoff to finish his mental struggle unaided. On the afternoon following the day of Marakoff's visit to the Baur-au-Lac there was a knock on the studio door, and on Marakoff's shouting hoarsely *"Herein!"* Artz showed himself.

"I was near and thought I would pay you a little visit."

"Sit down then. Smoke?"

"No, thank you. Too much smoking is no good to anyone."

"Well now, what is it?"

"But why suppose—"

"There is very little you do, Artz, that is without a reason.

I know that well. Do you think all of us round you are fools, that you are the only intelligent one?"

"Are you intelligent?"

"Yes, very."

"Sometimes I doubt that."

"Why?"

"Is it intelligent to resist, to fight against, good fortune? Is it intelligent to avoid happiness?"

"Happiness?"

"Is it intelligent to sit down, like Job among the potsherds, and resolve to stay there when you might be once again lifted to your throne? I think not."

"You are eloquent today. So you cannot let me alone!"

"It seems not."

"You want my advertisement. But now you have got hold of old Meyer. Is not he enough? Dr. Artz, the man who restored to the famous Monsieur Leon his vanished youth, his power to do harm once more! Surely that will send the worn-out millionaires to your *clinique* up there from all the countries of the world!" Marakoff spoke with savage irony.

But Artz was quite unperturbed. "It is not enough," he said. "I do want your advertisement. Marakoff's voice restored by Dr. Artz! That is what I want."

"Ah! you tell the truth for once, Artz."

"For once I do. Why not? Only a fool makes a daily practice of truth-telling."

"You have made a bargain sometimes, I suppose?"

"Now and then I have made a good bargain."

"Very seldom a bad one. I am sure of that. Suppose you make a bargain with me."

"What bargain?"

"Ah, I always knew you were a man full of suspicion."

"What bargain?"

"You want me very much for an experiment, do you not?"

"I do. I have told you so."

"Tell me something else. Who would be the best advertisement of your powers, Leon Meyer or I?"

Artz looked surprised, almost startled.

"Leon Meyer! What has he to do with it?"

"Artz, I have always said you are a bad man."

"Find for me the good man!"

"I know one here in Zurich."

"And who is that?"

"Not you. You are one of the worst. Tell me something. Meyer is up there in your *clinique*. I called upon him yesterday at the Baur-au-Lac. He was gone—to you."

"That is no secret."

"Has the operation taken place?"

"Not yet."

A sudden expression of cheerful, yet hard, very hard, decision transformed Marakoff's big, dramatic face. "Ah! Then the bargain is not impossible."

"What bargain? What bargain?" Into Artz's guttural voice an unusual irritation had come. His black eyes were intensely inquisitive. "Why should I make any bargain? And what has Meyer to do with it?"

"You need not make it. But I may suggest it. If you operate, successfully, on Meyer, I will not put myself in your hands. If you do not operate, or if you operate unsuccessfully, then—" He paused for a moment; then he said with determination, "I will—yes, I will."

Artz was silent. He continued to look surprised, even startled, less self-possessed than usual. A heavy frown came on his broad intellectual brow, which bulged above his small eyes and badly shaped nose. The eyes, fixed firmly on Marakoff, looked hard and defiant.

"What do you say, Artz?" Marakoff said at last, after waiting for the answer that didn't come. "Meyer, it is true, is famous in finance. The whole world of society knows him and calls him 'Mr. Leon.' On every bourse that exists his name is what they call a household word. There is one side of this question. On the other you have me—only a singer, a tenor of grand opera. But I will say that my name, not yet forgotten though it soon may be if we do not drive our bar-

gain, is known to many more thousands of people all over the world than Mr. Leon's name is.

"I am poor. I sit here in Zurich voiceless. Probably there are many who think me dead. For when a singer no longer sings there are always kind people who suppose he must be dead—dead on a dunghill, perhaps. But I am world-famous all the same. Which will serve you best as an advertisement, an old Jewish financier restored to a detestable semi-youthfulness and so able to go on doing harm; or a great singer restored to the power of singing and able once more to give innocent pleasure to thousands?"

As he had gone on speaking the native drama in Marakoff had begun to boil up. His big eyes opened wide and shone. His voice lost some of its hoarseness, took on an almost singing quality. A sort of glow came into his manner suggestive of hidden fires. But Artz faced him with an obstinate, shut and suspicious countenance.

"I do not like to hear you speak about Leon Meyer like that," he said. "How do you know why he has entered my *clinique?*"

"I do know. And I know why you wished Pauline Iselle to be my pupil."

Again, but only for a fraction of a second, Artz looked startled. "No, you do not! Impossible!"

"Shall I tell you why?"

"You cannot. You do not know. But if you like you can tell me what you think was the reason."

"You wished her to come here because you wished Meyer to follow her, and you knew he would."

"Why should Meyer follow Miss Iselle?" said Artz, with a sudden odd change of expression and manner. It was as if a weight dropped suddenly from him, leaving him freer than he had been a moment before.

"Artz, Artz, why take me for a fool? I have traveled over the whole world with open eyes. How can I be blind to what men are? I have known what Meyer is for at least twenty years, perhaps more. But the lark is not for him."

"And do you really suppose that I wish to hand Miss Iselle

over to Meyer when he comes out of my *clinique?*" said Artz, with a sort of acrid contempt.

"I do not know whether you actually wish to. But you have used her as bait for Meyer. I am certain of that. But remember, Artz! In Huguenin's I told you that if you brought a lark to me I should protect her voice. Well, this girl is a lark. And now the time has come for me to protect it. And I shall do it. Which advertisement shall it be? Meyer or Marakoff? The power to do evil restored, or the divine power—to sing?"

"Marakoff, this is absurd. There is no question—"

"Ah, you do not really believe you can give me back my voice!" exclaimed Marakoff, harshly.

"I do! I genuinely believe that!" said Artz, with sudden pressing sincerity, sincerity not to be mistaken. "If you undergo what is necessary, if you faithfully follow my orders, if nothing I prescribe is avoided or left out, I feel certain I can make you once more the man you were."

"In how long a time?"

"By next spring."

"So that next spring I should be able—"

"Let us say by next May."

"Next May! Next May!"

"That is surely good enough for you! No question of Meyer enters in here."

"Ah—you devil, Artz!" Marakoff suddenly cried out. "But I will not be tempted."

"What do you mean?"

"I lay down my conditions. Either it is Meyer, or it is I."

Again Dr. Artz frowned heavily, and his mouth set in a grimace, grotesque in its bitterness. "Who has told you that Meyer has any bad intention towards Miss Iselle?" he said.

"My intuition has told me," said Marakoff quickly.

"Nonsense!"

"Nevertheless I stick by it."

"You come to a doctor and you actually dare to ask him deliberately to perform an unsuccessful operation?"

"I do. Just that!"

"Only a Russian could do such a thing!"

"Ah! The Asiatic cleverness that leaves the European in the distance!"

"My dear Marakoff!"

"My dearest Artz!"

"You insult the doctor in me, Marakoff."

"And you—you insult in me the man who *understands!*"

"I cannot do it. I cannot consider such an outrageous proposal. It would be criminal."

"I think to be successful with Meyer—that would be criminal."

"You do not understand anything about the case. And I am not going to tell you. Doctors never discuss their cases."

"I ask you nothing about Meyer's case. I tell you."

"And who has been telling you lies about Meyer and me? Carl Fügler, perhaps?" For the very first time since Marakoff had known Dr. Artz he saw him really in a rage. And the rage came suddenly, like a violent gust of wind, and swept him. "That abominable fellow Fügler is always trying to get in the way and do me harm."

"Carl Fügler is not in this, and he is a fine fellow."

"May he be damned! That is what I say!"

"Now, Artz—"

"I do nothing to him, but just because he is young and I am doing good to those who are not young he spits all over me. He is a venomous fellow! And as ignorant as he is venomous! No, do not praise Fügler to me. I will not hear that!"

It seemed that the gust was developing into a whirlwind. Artz's face had become congested, puffed out by the angry blood. His eyes were lambent with fires which were certainly never generated in heaven. His mouth worked, grimaced. His fists came down again and again on his knees. Violent breathings distended his prominent chest.

"No one shall praise to me one who dares to thrust himself into my life coarsely, savagely, even into my life as a medical man, a man of science—"

"But Füglers—"

"He has! I say he has!" almost shouted Artz. "He leads the young of this town against me! He—"

"Artz, this really is madness!"

"Madness! You do not understand! You teach singing here shut up in this studio. How can you know what a city is being made to think, being made to say? But I have my ear to the ground always, and I know! And *you* are made to say to me that you will not be my patient unless I fail in my duty to another patient. I say that it is disgraceful, unheard of!"

"It may be, I dare say it is," said Marakoff, opposing now a cold inflexibility to Artz's fury, "unheard of! But you are not an ordinary doctor. You are not trying to do ordinary things."

"No, indeed! I am much greater than an ordinary doctor. But the little spitting Füglers, they cannot see that."

"*Basta,* Artz! It is for you to choose. If Meyer comes out of your *clinique* rejuvenated—you understand!—you shall never have me as a patient. That I swear!" He raised a big hand almost mystically, and for a moment there came into his face the look of a devotee.

"Then your voice—you will never get it back!" And without another word Artz was gone from the studio.

But within a week from that day he came to ask Marakoff to be his patient, on Marakoff's terms. Either his love of experiment was so great that it had conquered his cupidity, or he took the long view and believed that in sacrificing Meyer to Marakoff he would eventually come out a big winner.

Marakoff agreed.

XXV

PAULINE was overjoyed at Marakoff's offer to teach her for nothing. She had no doubt that in time she would be able to pay him all back out of her earnings as a singer. But

there still remained all her living expenses in Zurich. And she had never known anything about money matters beyond the one permanent fact that daddy never had any money.

It was no use at all applying to daddy. He was fond of her. He wrote to her now and then a charming whimsical letter all about nothing. But poor daddy just hadn't anything. He would always be living in shabby lodgings with folding doors and curtains of Nottingham lace and dingy cruet-stands throning on sideboards of sham mahogany.

Pauline thought of Miss Vyvyan. She couldn't entirely get rid of the old feeling of dependence which had formerly linked her to her first teacher. But Miss Vyvyan had been so "horrid" about that night of singing on the water with Carl. And since then they had never been on comfortable terms together. And besides—no, Pauline couldn't go to Miss Vyvyan.

Of course Carl Fügler was out of the question—dear Carl. She had a tremendously warm sense of friendship, of comradeship for him. She didn't mind his knowing something of the great difficulty she was in. But she was a girl and Carl was a young man. And so of course Carl was ruled out.

Madame Müller was a hard-working woman earning her own living. She couldn't ask Madame Müller for money.

In this crisis—to Pauline it seemed to be a very important crisis—she realized how few real friends she possessed. She hadn't thought about that till now. Finally she came to a perhaps queer decision. She resolved to have a talk, a guarded talk, with Herr Weber.

There was something in Herr Weber that was wonderfully understanding. She had a special feeling for him. She called it her "Weber feeling." She resolved to have a talk with Herr Weber, but before she was able to carry out her intention something very unpleasant happened at the *pension*.

Ever since Princess Teresco had returned to the *pension* from Dr. Artz's *clinique* she had been disagreeable to Pauline. A curious change was noticeable in her since her stay in the *clinique*. Before, she had suggested an often furtive feverishness, an excitement not wholly charming in a woman of her age.

Now she was frankly vital, abounded in hot vitality. And all this vitality, this spendthrift vitality, flowed out in various channels. And one of these channels was unfortunately a channel of enmity for Pauline.

This enmity was shown in various ways: by hostile looks, by biting remarks, usually full of satire, addressed to Pauline before others, and occasionally by a manner of contemptuous and arrogant indifference, which was made the more noticeable by a contrast of charm and good nature in connection with the rest of Madame Müller's guests. In consequence these dwellers in the *pension* who, with the exception of the students already there when Pauline came to Zurich, and of Khalil Ibrahim, were all elderly or old, adored the princess, and some of them began to turn a rather cold shoulder to Pauline. They certainly had nothing against the young singer, who was always polite and unpretentious with them. But by degrees the attitude of this important great lady, who honored the *pension* by living in it instead of in one of the smart hotels, caused them to think less of Pauline. If the princess so obviously disapproved of the girl there must surely be some reason for her disapproval.

They found it—they were perhaps prompted to find it—in Pauline's behavior with men, and especially with Carl Fügler, and with Khalil Ibrahim, called in the *pension* "the prince."

Carl Fügler seldom came to the *pension,* and never to call on Pauline. But he now and then looked in to see one of the students, the American, Van Deyn. On these occasions he was sometimes seen speaking to Pauline in one of the public rooms and of course it was known that they studied together in Marakoff's studio.

But though there was really nothing to find fault with in the young people's conduct in the *pension* it somehow became known that "outside" they were not so circumspect. It seemed that Carl Fügler possessed a mysterious sort of bachelor residence outside the town, and well away from the house where he lived with his mother in apparent respectability. The place, a sort of pavilion or bungalow, was hidden away in a secluded garden full of bushes, but though secluded it was surrounded

by other mysterious pavilions. And in these pavilions there dwelt a sort of community of self-styled "nature-worshipers," whose worship consisted mainly, so far as could be ascertained, in the flinging-off of clothes, and in the going about, and sitting about, totally nude save for the protection afforded by exiguous "loin cloths."

And to Herr Fügler's quarters, bungalow, pavilion, hut, call it what you would, Pauline had actually gone one afternoon, or perhaps evening, entirely alone, and had remained there for a considerable time, and had finally returned to Zurich openly in the company of the nature-worshiper.

This was bad enough. But it seemed that not contented with mysterious visits to the Naturheil-Verein, and the company of the unconventional, even savage young giant, Pauline Iselle was endeavoring to detach from his great friendship with their princess, Prince Khalil Ibrahim.

Now Khalil Ibrahim certainly had been very friendly indeed with the princess who, so the *pension* averred, had "mothered" the lonely young Egyptian now learning the ways of Europe far from his country and friends. His Highness ought to be grateful to her for giving him the run of her sitting-room, her cigarette, even her cigar, box, and for always having a seat free for him in her limousine. To say nothing of little dinners at the Baur-au-Lac and the Dolder, when popping champagne corks made a pleasant obbligato to the music of orchestras. And his Highness had been grateful until Miss Iselle "interfered."

How exactly Pauline had interfered no one could say with exactitude. But she must have done something to fix the prince's dark attention upon herself and her fairness. Otherwise, being such a charming boy, he would certainly never have begun to "desert" the mothering princess and to "run after" a girl who was already sufficiently compromised with the nature-worshiper of the Naturheil-Verein.

The core of the whole matter, which the *pension* in its devotion to its one and only *grande dame* did not, perhaps could not, see, lay in Khalil Ibrahim's secret infatuation for Pauline. Her snow-whiteness and soft yellowness, and grayness, all

touched with silver, laid an ever increasing burden of charm on the nature of the young Egyptian, till he was quite weighed down by it. He would probably have shown his feelings much sooner than he did had it not been for the intervention of the princess.

She came out of Dr. Artz's *clinique* with her natural penchant for handsome young males greatly increased by the treatment she had been undergoing. And here was an extraordinarily handsome young man, an Egyptian, too, with all an Egyptian's fine freedom from stupid outworn prejudices, actually living in the *pension* from which she had intended to depart on the morrow. Instantly she had changed her mind. She had resolved to stay. The princess had no vain scruples. She was a huntress.

Khalil Ibrahim allowed himself to be diverted from his original intention, which had been wholly concentrated on Pauline. The princess was charming, rich, a woman of the world, ardent. She had a motorcar—and was ardent. She had a very comfortable sitting-room, excellent cigarettes and even cigars—and was ardent. She had a maid who knew how to make perfect Turkish coffee, she gave little dinners at the Dolder and the Baur-au-Lac. At these dinners the very best dry champagne flowed freely—and she was ardent.

Khalil Ibrahim was enticed for a while. He saw the princess's hatred for Pauline, an amorous, aging woman's hatred of youth, the hatred of a woman supplied with a false youthfulness for the genuine lovely thing of which, at best, she could only hope to be a base imitation. He saw and understood it with oriental sharpness, and for a time he was careful. The motorcar, the Turkish coffee, the comfortable sitting-room, the little dinners with dry champagne at the Dolder and the Baur-au-Lac—all these things, as it were, whispered to him, "Be careful."

But presently his caution began to wear thin and the princess with her horribly sharp eyes observed it. She saw how he looked at Pauline, how he devised opportunities for speaking to her, how he lingered in the corridor when she was practicing her singing, how he managed to be about when she went out to, and

came in from, her lessons. She saw, and the *pension* saw. Only Pauline did not seem to notice anything unusual in Khalil's concentration upon her. She thought that he liked her, but she was so indifferent to him, and so taken up with her singing and her new anxieties, that his liking neither troubled nor touched her. Simply she didn't bother about it.

And then, at last, quite suddenly, Khalil's power to be careful crashed. And that crash brought about the painful episode in which Pauline was involved.

The princess had "got up" a little dinner for a certain night. It was to take place at the Baur-au-Lac and of course Khalil Ibrahim was invited. In fact the dinner was being given only for him. But he was not told that and believed there would be a party. He thought of the dry champagne and accepted, although he was already very near to the crash. The persistent interference of the princess with his young life was beginning to get terribly on his nerves. He had come to live in the *pension* because Pauline was there and had allowed himself to be monopolized by a woman who hated her. And this had happened because he was sensual and because he was greedy, too fond of the good things of life. But he had another side, partly sensual, too, but also partly romantic, and Pauline's simplicity and detachment and fairness appealed to it. And he had neglected this appeal for the use of a car, for food, for drinks, for smokes, and for the violence of a determined huntress who would not leave him in peace and freedom.

Quite suddenly Khalil hated the princess. She was suffocating him with her tenderness. She was holding him in prison with her passion. The assumption that he belonged to her was becoming blatant. The old oriental conception of woman as a toy for man's pleasure, rose in Khalil to fight against her western determination to reduce him to servitude. A violent desire to break away from her came to him. He looked back on all the lost days and was furious. A longing to revenge himself on the princess for her success took hold of him. It grew in him, seemed to culminate on the day for which the dinner had been fixed.

Although he had accepted the princess's invitation Khalil resolved not to go. At the last moment he would send an excuse. And he would use the evening in the English girl's service. The princess—so he understood—had invited other guests. She would be away for the evening. He would persuade Miss Iselle to stay in the conversation room after dinner. He would persuade her to sing to him. He would—he would— What wouldn't he do? In his anger against the princess he felt ready for any crude action.

But the princess had not invited any guests. She meant to dine alone with Khalil. She had not told him this because she had noticed the change in him, and was afraid that if he knew they were to be alone he might not accept her invitation. Long experience had taught her the signs of weariness in men.

She did not offer to take Khalil with her to the hotel. It seemed that she had to pay a mysterious visit just before the dinner. But she told Khalil that she would send back the motor to fetch him at five minutes to eight and would meet him in the hotel hall.

At half past seven she got into her motor and drove to the house of Dr. Artz, where she was hospitably entertained by the doctor, who gave her a cocktail, in which among other ingredients were iodin and old brandy.

At five minutes to eight the motor was before the *pension* waiting for Khalil Ibrahim.

When it was announced Khalil went downstairs and gave the chauffeur a note for the princess. In it he had excused himself from the dinner with great regret. He had been suddenly attacked by neuralgia. It happened to be a wet night. He wrote that he was afraid to venture out in the damp and must stay in and go to bed early. Believing that the princess was giving a dinner to several people he was sure that she couldn't possibly come back till after eleven. In the meanwhile he had three hours before him. He was resolved to use them well. He had lost how many evenings with that intolerable princess!

The car went away with his note and he ran upstairs lightly.

In the *pension* dinner was at half past seven, unless some-

one ordered a special dinner for some other hour as the princess often did. Khalil went into the dining-room and sat down at his table.

Most of the guests looked surprised. Somehow it had "got about" that he was dining with their princess that night. Khalil asked for the meat course. He didn't want anything else. He had his eye on Pauline, who sat at a table beyond his, higher up the room. She must pass him in going out.

He craned his brown neck. She was eating an ice. Would that meat course never come? It came at last and he told the maid he wouldn't want anything else.

"I am not very well," he said to her in German, rather loudly, in order to be overheard. (He put his hand to his temple.) "Headache—neuralgia!" he added. "It is this horrible damp weather."

"Ach so!" said the maid with compassion. He was such a good-looking young prince. She went away and Khalil began to eat quickly. He didn't notice that she went to Madame Müller's table. His eyes were for Pauline. But very soon Madame Müller got up and came to him.

"I'm very sorry to hear you are not well, monseigneur."

"It's true I've got neuralgia. I didn't dare go out." He had got up and was standing.

"Pray sit down, monseigneur. Let me fetch you some aspirin."

"Thanks. I wish you would."

She went away. But Khalil remained standing. He had seen Pauline getting up. "Miss Iselle!" he said softly, while the *pension* stretched its neck.

"Yes, Prince Khalil?" said Pauline, looking surprised.

"I have got a raging headache tonight."

"Oh, I am sorry!"

"Will you give me some medicine?"

"Medicine! I haven't got any."

"Just sing me the 'Chanson Indoue' when I come out. I heard you playing it the other day softly in your room." How strangely burning his eyes looked, she thought. "Will you?"

"Yes," said Pauline. "But if your head—"

"Your voice will do me good. It is such a silvery voice."

"Very well, I will." She looked pleased. She went away looking pleased, as the eyes of the *pension* noticed.

In a moment Khalil followed her. He went into the room where the Blüthner piano was, sat down by it and waited.

"Where is the prince?" he heard Madame Müller's voice say outside. She was looking for him with the aspirin.

He got up, went to her, took it and the tumblerful of water she had got ready for him. "That ought to do me good. Thank you," he said, in the soft boyish voice he used in speaking to women.

"And better go to bed early."

"I will."

He went back to the Blüthner piano. There were only two old ladies in the room, sitting in a corner and talking, their gray heads very close together. The other guests were probably taking coffee in a farther room and in the veranda walled in with glass.

In a moment Pauline came holding the song he had asked for. Khalil opened the piano. Again she noticed the peculiar burning look in his eyes. "I hope you haven't got a temperature," she said, inquiringly. "I think you look rather feverish."

"Sing to me!" he said. He lowered his voice. "I have been wasting my time here. I want to make up for the lost time."

"Do you? Yes?" She looked inquiring, but not strongly. He felt her gentle detachment, so different from the princess's rapacity and ugly eagerness.

"Of course," Khalil said, "directly you begin to sing they will all come in here, all of them. I want to talk to you tonight. When you have finished, will you come and sit with me for half an hour in the room with the French billiards? I do feel lonely tonight. It is because I am not very well, I suppose. Will you?"

"But what can I do?"

"Just talk to me. Tell me about your singing. We are both students here. But I have been wasting my time."

He spoke with a strong pressure of excitement. She fancied he was really unwell and excited perhaps because of that. "I will come for a little while," she said. And then she began to play Rimsky-Korsakov's song, and to sing.

The *pension* came creeping in. Miss Iselle singing to his Highness! And the princess? But surely his Highness had been going to dine with her at the Baur-au-Lac! Neuralgia, aspirin, music! David certainly had soothed Saul's madness with music, or had striven to soothe it. But this was a different sort of business.

How Khalil hated the *pension* at that moment! But he listened to the singing and he watched the singer, and he cursed the princess, and her limousine, and the cigars, Turkish coffee, dry champagne. Why had he allowed himself to be lured by good things and taken possession of? He felt a savage enmity against the woman who had been successful with him.

When the song was ended he said: "I love your voice. But all these old things! Let us go!" And he took her away.

That was how it seemed to the now wondering *pension*—a taking-away. Only the *pension* chose to put it like this:

"Just think of her taking his Highness away like that!"

There was no one in the room with the French billiards. Khalil shut the door. He wanted to sit down on the divan in the corner and to take Pauline in his arms. But he looked at her and said, "Let us have a game! Shall we?"

"If you like. But I play very badly."

"I will teach you how to make following cannons."

"But—your neuralgia!"

"Anything to take my mind off it. Your singing did me good. Your voice is like silver. Do you know I always think of silver when I look at you, or think of you? Some day you must come to my country, to Egypt."

"Perhaps I shall sing in Egypt."

"You must." His eyes became suddenly cunning. "I have influence in Cairo through my connection with the royal family. I can do a lot for you there—when you are ready."

Pauline flushed. She seemed about to say something impor-

tant, but Khalil's eyes—perhaps—kept her lips from it, and she only said, "What cue shall I use?"

"I will choose for you. Not a heavy one. You are so—so—"

He broke off and went to fetch a cue. His eyes had stopped Pauline and now her eyes prevented him. But—presently! They had all the evening before them.

"Before we begin a game let me teach you some different ways of making cannons." He gave her the cue, after chalking it. "No, do not hold it quite like that. Hold it much nearer the end. Let me show you." He leaned with her over the table. "Excuse me!" He laid his dark hand over hers and with his other hand took hold of the hand that was on the green cloth. "To make a good bridge you must—"

The door opened. The princess came hurriedly in with Dr. Artz following behind her.

Pauline felt the startled squeeze which the Egyptian gave to her hands before he released them, and that squeeze seemed to her like a cry. She turned round, the billiards cue still in her hand. Dr. Artz bowed to her suavely.

"Good evening, Miss Iselle."

Pauline didn't answer. The princess was speaking rapidly to Khalil.

"Is this the breeding of Egypt?" she said. And strangely she was smiling, kept on smiling, while she spoke. "Are these the manners of an Egyptian gentleman? You allow a woman to arrange a dinner for you. You accept her invitation. You let her start for the restaurant where the dinner is to be given. You let her actually go there and wait there for you. And then you give her chauffeur a note to say that you are ill and cannot come. You are ill suddenly, ill all in a minute, quite well at seven, desperately ill at five minutes to eight. A sudden attack! Poor boy."

Her smile flickered, then broadened, seemed as if it were going away, then grew more definite, a determined smile. "Poor boy! You must not think I am angry with you, though it is not particularly pleasant—no, really it is not—for a woman who has ordered a dinner to be kept waiting all alone in a

big hotel for a man who does not come, and then has to go to the *maître d'hôtel* and settle for a dinner that has been ordered and not eaten.

"Your neuralgia should really have started half an hour sooner, or, say, an hour sooner to give me a chance. But of course you could not help that. No! These things do come on so suddenly, do not they? We never know when we shall be attacked. It is too bad! But I bear you no malice. I am only sorry. So when I got your note I canceled the dinner—I have had no dinner, nothing!—and I thought, 'Now what can I do to help the poor boy, who is suffering so badly that he cannot eat or drive for five minutes in a shut car in the rain? What can I do? What can I do?' "

The smile became almost a grin, and the voice grew louder, and the words came more quickly. "I ordered a cocktail, and I thought, 'Now what can I do?' I was full of sympathy. You do not know how my woman's heart bleeds for all those who suffer. And while I was drinking my cocktail"—her voice rose —"the thought came to me, 'Be a good Samaritan. Return good for evil. Your dinner is spoilt. Your evening is wasted. You cannot eat alone in a restaurant with all the waiters standing round you and laughing because of the empty place. But you can do something for *him,* the poor suffering boy in the *pension,* who is too ill to go out, who is missing his dinner. You can go and find a doctor to help him, the best doctor in Zurich!" She turned sharply to Dr. Artz. The smile suddenly left her face. "Are you not the best doctor in Zurich?"

"Princess," began Dr. Artz, in a very smooth and calm voice, "let—"

"Are you or are you not the best doctor in Zurich? But it does not matter. You are supposed to be, and anyhow you can do your best. I have brought you. Here is the poor suffering patient!" Her voice rose to a higher pitch. "Here he is! Try to help him. Do what you can. Bring all your science to bear. Give him something. Do something to stop the pain. I cannot stand here and see the poor boy suffering. I hate to see people in agony. I am a merciful woman. I am a—I am a—I am a—"

Her voice rose to a shriek, then suddenly died down to a whimper. She stretched her arms towards Pauline, gasped and went into violent hysterics.

The *pension* was listening at the door.

XXVI

HERR WEBER, the brother of Madame Müller, was sitting in the midst of the ordered chaos of his establishment on the following morning carving in wood the fierce profile of the Nietzsche of "Ecce Homo," when the faint melodious sound of a bell indicated that some visitor had opened the outer door. He went on meticulously with his work, bending his slight frame over it in the light from the window behind him.

His mind was wholly concentrated on Nietzsche. That ferocious face, the outstanding vein on the left temple, the upspringing hair—defiance even in the hair, defiance of the opinions of the herd, defiance of the assaults of life, defiance of pain! What a man! Herr Weber was wonderfully gentle, was emotional and immersed in the worship of beauty and in attempts to create beauty, but something in him groveled at the feet of the blazing philosopher, whose aphorisms cut like finely tempered steel, and who was lonely in light-giving.

"We must dominate!" he murmured over his carving. "Yes. We must never give in. We are here to resist and if possible to conquer." And then he repeated to himself a saying of Nietzsche that was often on his lips, "He who wakes us wounds us. But it is better to be awake. Sleeping is not living. He who would live must be sleepless."

"Herr Weber! Can I speak to you, please?"

"Mademoiselle Pauline!"

Carefully he laid down the wooden plaque, got up, and went to where Pauline was standing in the midst of the

crowded rummage of treasures to which Herr Weber was perpetually adding.

"What is the matter?" he added, taking one of her hands in his thin-fingered hand. His shining imaginative eyes examined her softly.

"I want to tell you. I feel I must tell you. I shall have to leave the *pension.*"

"Leave my sister! Leave Frieda! But you cannot have quarreled with Frieda!"

"Shall I tell you here?"

"No. My workmen come in and out here. We will go in here to the right. It is early yet. Probably no one will come."

He led Pauline to another good-sized room, crammed with more furniture, ornaments, pictures, statuettes, and old pieces of silver.

"Here, mademoiselle! Sit in this chair. It is from Venice. You can see by the lions' heads. What is the matter?"

"It isn't your sister. She has always been very kind to me. But such a dreadful thing happened last night." And then she told him about the episode of Khalil Ibrahim and the princess, and how the whole of the *pension* knew, had indeed practically been witness of the horror.

"She screamed. I thought she would never stop screaming. Dr. Artz took her away to her room. But she struggled. Oh, Herr Weber, I never saw anything like that before. And everyone blames me."

"Everyone? Does my sister—does Frieda blame you?"

"No, she doesn't. But all the people in the *pension* take the princess's part. They think—they think that—but I never wanted the prince to like me. I never tried to make him bother about me. I am here for singing. I came here to learn how to sing for opera. I have no time—the princess is different. She has nothing to do. And she is quite different from me. I know she is the prince's friend. But what has that to do with me? And I had no idea that he ought to have been dining with her. He didn't tell me. Everyone in the *pension* seems to have known but me. But I didn't know. And now they are

saying horrible things about me. And besides—the prince—I must leave. I can't stay there now."

"The prince—you say?" said Herr Weber, very gently.

"The prince seems half mad. He—I don't want him to come after me. I don't want to see any more of him. I'm afraid of him. Why can't people leave me alone?"

Herr Weber smiled and moved his studious head. "And why cannot I leave good pictures, old furniture, all these things of value alone? I am poor, mademoiselle, and I shall always be horribly poor because I cannot resist beauty. When I see a lovely thing I must try to get it for myself."

"But you sell things!"

"Yes. But many things I do not sell. And all the money I get for selling is spent on more buying. People do not leave you alone because you are rare, mademoiselle."

"But—"

"I know. You have come suddenly up against the terrible 'but.' One minute!" He went away and came back with the plaque of Nietzsche. "Look at that, mademoiselle. What do you see?"

"Strength," said Pauline, after an instant of contemplation. "That man—who is it?"

"Nietzsche."

"Is he alive?"

"No."

"He was strong."

"Yes. He said 'Yea' to life." She looked up at him inquiringly. "That is he accepted life, all of life that came his way, strongly, with a brave 'Yea,' not with a timid, shrinking, whimpering 'Nay.'"

"I understand."

"We must try to do the same. What you have to do is to say 'Yea' to what has happened at the *pension.*"

"But how am I to do that?"

"You say you have done nothing wrong."

"No, nothing."

"Then why must you leave? Is that saying 'Yea'?"

"But the princess—"

"Let her leave, let Prince Ibrahim leave, if they like to. But why must you leave? Does Frieda wish it?"

"Madame Müller knows that I had nothing to do with the prince's staying away from the princess's dinner. She does not blame me. But—the princess is important, and she has the best rooms. And then Khalil Ibrahim is a prince, they say."

"Has Frieda asked you to leave?" said Herr Weber, sternly.

"Oh, no! But I don't want to do anything that—"

"I shall speak to her. Now look well at that!" He held up before her the carving of Nietzsche. "Go back, stay on in the *pension,* say 'Yea' to whatever those silly, ignorant people choose to say or do. Hold your head high. Show you are something—besides a singer." He took both her hands. "Do you know, Mademoiselle Pauline, that you have in you the power to say 'Yea'? I feel it. Do not you?"

"I think perhaps I do. But only when it is something to do with my singing."

"Take this then as the beginning of your singer's career. Defy! You will surely have much to go through as a public singer. All artists must fight. Better begin in good time. Then you will learn the use of weapons. If you cannot fight a little *pension* here in Zurich, will you ever be able to fight a big opera house, the Scala in Milan, perhaps? You must not run away. I shall see Frieda today."

Pauline returned to the *pension* seized with a new intention, the intention to say "Yea" to life. But the situation she had to face was a difficult one. Madame Müller was greatly troubled by it and could not conceal her trouble from Pauline. The princess had recovered from her seizure of the night before, had demanded an interview with Madame Müller, and had delivered an ultimatum. Either Miss Iselle must be "put out" or she, the princess, would leave at once.

Madame Müller endeavored to temporize. As carefully as she could she tried to place the blame for what had happened on the shoulders of Prince Khalil Ibrahim. But the princess indignantly refused to admit that the prince was in fault. He

had been forced into what he had done by the shameless girl who had already made herself the talk of all Zurich with young Carl Fügler. Madame Müller said what she could with sincerity for Pauline. But the princess was immovable. If Madame Müller preferred Miss Iselle as a guest to herself she would go, and she was certain that Prince Khalil would go, too.

This threat elicited from Madame Müller a mildly expressed statement that it would be better if the prince gave up his room after all that had happened.

"In that case I shall leave you at once, madame," said the princess. "If the prince is turned out on my account it would be most unchivalrous of me to stay on."

Madame Müller with many expressions of regret begged for a little time to think the matter over. After leaving the princess she went to Pauline, who had returned from her visit to Herr Weber. Perhaps Madame Müller hoped that Pauline would say that after the scandal of the previous night she preferred to leave. But ostensibly she only came to talk things over with her dear Pauline, whom she found unusually self-possessed, and so confident in her own freedom from fault that there seemed really no opening for even a hint that the girl's departure would help to make things easier. Herr Weber's words had indeed borne fruit. Pauline was resolved to say her first absolute definite "Yea" to life.

Madame Müller was baffled. For her the situation was becoming critical, for all her boarders, with the exception of the three young students, were on the princess's side and against Pauline. She put on her hat with the intention of seeking advice from her brother, but when she was close to the Stadt Theater on her way to him she saw Pauline's former chaperon, Miss Vyvyan, crossing the big open space in front of it, probably going home to her hotel.

"Mademoiselle Vyvyan! Mademoiselle Vyvyan!" called Madame Müller.

Miss Vyvyan stopped and looked round. "Madame Müller! How are you? But what's the matter?"

"I will walk with you for a moment if you will allow me."

"Of course. But what is the matter?"

"A most dreadful thing has happened at the *pension.*"

Miss Vyvyan stopped in the road. "Has Pauline anything to do with it?"

"Yes, yes, she has. It all happened because of her!"

Miss Vyvyan put out a hand and clasped Madame Müller's wrist with it tightly. "Carl—Herr Fügler! Had *he* anything to do with it?"

"No, of course not. Why should he have? He does not live in the *pension.*"

Miss Vyvyan's hand unclasped from the wrist. "Then what was it?"

Hastily Madame Müller related the dreadful happening. "And now what can I do?" she said in conclusion. "I am not blaming Pauline. I don't believe she is in fault at all. Prince Khalil brought it about. He has fallen in love with Pauline, of course. She is so pretty. And then her little air of indifference—that piques them. You mentioned Carl Fügler just now. I am sure he is in love with her, too. But you see my position. I have to earn my living. The princess is a very valuable boarder for me. Then the young man is a royal prince. And of course that pleases my boarders. You can understand that."

"What do you want me to do?"

Madame Müller was so immersed in her troubles that she did not notice the cold stiffness with which the question was put, and she went on, speaking quickly and urgently:

"I thought it would be wise under the circumstances if Pauline were to go back to you. If you again took charge of her nobody could say anything, whereas—"

"No, I can't! It's quite impossible."

"But why? Why shouldn't Pauline go back to the Eden, join you there? Then no one could—"

"I am leaving the Eden. I haven't been very well lately, and I am going into a *clinique.*"

"Really! But you don't look ill. I was thinking how unusually vital and active you were looking."

"I have to undergo a slight operation."

Madame Müller's intelligent eyes became suddenly intent. "Not—not in Dr. Artz's *clinique?*" she said.

"Yes, in Dr. Artz's *clinique.*"

Madame Müller was silent.

"So you see," said Miss Vyvyan, "it's quite impossible for me to take back Pauline at present. I shan't be at the Eden." Madame Müller said nothing. "Otherwise—perhaps—but I really don't know. Good-by, Madame Müller."

"Good-by, mademoiselle."

Miss Vyvyan walked away quickly and turned the corner, going to the left by the lake. Madame Müller looked after her for a moment. "Dr. Artz again!" she murmured. Then she hastened away to Niemannstrasse. She must see her brother at once.

But she got no consolation from her brother. Gentle though he usually was, he could be inflexible. And as he was totally unworldly he could seldom, or never, see any necessity for compromise. He did not tell his sister that Pauline had consulted him. He listened to her narrative and then calmly pronounced his judgment. Miss Iselle, of course, must stay. The princess and Prince Khalil must go if they would. In any event the Egyptian must be got rid of. He was a danger to the girl. Miss Iselle being innocent in the affair, she must be defended against calumny.

"But my boarders!" said poor Madame Müller.

"Do not fear, Frieda. They will stay with you. Your terms are too reasonable and your cooking is much too good for them to leave you because of the vagaries of a jealous woman made dangerous by Dr. Artz."

"Dr. Artz!" said Madame Müller, startled. "Then you think—"

"I think that man is a pest," said Herr Weber, with unusual animation, almost amounting to temper.

"Why, brother?"

"As we grow old there are ugly things that nature usually causes to die down in us, so that we may grow calm in preparation for the beyond. One of these things is the fire of lust.

It seems that Dr. Artz has a means of causing this fire to blaze up fiercely in the middle-aged and old. I say seriously that to do this is devilish."

"Yes, yes. I dare say you are right. But—but Dr. Artz has helped me a good deal with boarders."

"Ah, Frieda, you still wear the chain. You have not loosed yourself from self-interest." He stroked one of her hands. "But you are fundamentally kind. Go home and do the right thing. Be kind to Mademoiselle Pauline. Your boarders will not leave you."

"The princess and Prince Khalil will."

"Let them. You will be better without them. They are dirty people."

"But she takes a sitting-room and brings a maid with her."

"Maids! Sitting-rooms! What have they to do with our duty to ourselves? Frieda, if you deny *yourself* I shall despise you, as I despise faked furniture, and pictures that pretend to be what they are not. Go home now, and do what *you* secretly wish to do."

"There is nobody quite like you, Gerhardt," said Madame Müller. "But it keeps you poor." She went out of the chaos of beautiful things. But on the doorstep she stopped. "I met Mademoiselle Vyvyan just now," she said.

"Did you?"

"And I—"

"Well, sister?"

"I asked her to take Pauline back."

"That was very cowardly of you."

"She refused."

"That, perhaps, was cowardly of her."

"But she is leaving the Eden. She is going into Dr. Artz's *clinique* to be operated on."

"Another!"

"And, Gerhardt, I am sure she is in love with Carl Fügler. I will tell you why. When—"

But Herr Weber held up his hand. "No, no! I will not hear gossip about love-affairs. I hate all that."

"But Pauline and Carl Fügler—"

"Let them find their own way. We must respect youth as well as love it. It may be nearer to the source of all beauty than we are."

Madame Müller informed the princess with very great regret that she could not think of turning Miss Iselle out and that she was obliged to ask his Highness, Prince Khalil, to find other quarters.

"Very well, Madame Müller," said the princess, "then I shall leave, too. You are behaving very badly. I shall let people know what I think of you."

"I am extremely sorry, princess. But Mademoiselle Iselle—"

"Mademoiselle Iselle is a very dangerous girl. I knew it directly I saw her. She is an adventuress, one of those fair demivierges who play the innocent and who are really corrupt. Corrupt! Corrupt! She will make you regret what you are doing. But, forgive me for saying it, you know nothing whatever of the world. I shall leave the *pension* today and go to the Baur-au-Lac. Maria!" Her voice rose in a peacock cry.

"Che vuole?" came another peacock cry from the bedroom.

"Fate subito i bagagli! Io me ne vado da qui. Non voglio restarci un altro momento." With an air of sudden intense hauteur she turned to Madame Müller. "Be kind enough to send in your account at once, madame. We need not meet again." Her face was mottled with red patches as she hurried into the bedroom.

That same day she departed. But Khalil Ibrahim refused to leave and eventually Madame Müller was obliged to send for her brother. Herr Weber had an interview with "the prince" in private. Nobody ever knew what happened during it. But when Herr Weber came out of the room he said to his sister, "The Egyptian is going."

By nightfall the *pension* was bereft of its two grandees, and Pauline was cut by everyone, except by the three students. But she tried to hold her fair head high. Was she not saying her first definite "Yea" to life?

XXVII

CARL FUGLER sometimes went in the evening to the Bellevue Bar next door to the Café de la Terrasse, where the students and artists of Zurich assemble to discuss the affairs of the day, to indulge in pronouncements on contemporary art and music, to smoke, to drink beer, to tell humorous stories. And it happened that he turned in there on the night after the princess's abrupt departure from Madame Müller's. A wet spell had set in over that part of Switzerland. The rain was coming down heavily. And in consequence of this the bar was unusually crowded.

Harry Van Deyn, the American student who lived at the *pension,* saw Carl's tall figure and auburn mop near the door and beckoned to him. "Fügler!" shouted Van Deyn again. "Come over here! I want you!"

Carl waved a big hand. But he was loosing his mind on those around him, and once he began to do that it was almost impossible to stop him. When at last he stopped with a vehement gesture Van Deyn called again, and beckoned so imperatively that Carl came up the room to the table where Van Deyn was sitting alone. "What is it? You want me?"

"Yes. Sit down. What'll you have?"

"I'll have an Amstel."

"Take this seat."

"Anything wrong?"

Van Deyn leaned over the table. "Have you heard what's happened at the *pension?*" At once Carl looked intent. "Bring me two Amstels, please!" said Van Deyn to the waiter.

"No. What has happened?"

"There's been an unholy row, and our two chief boarders, our two grandees, have bolted, been kicked out, warned off, or something. Anyhow they've gone."

"Who has gone?"

"The Roumanian princess and the Egyptian prince, or whatever he is, Khalil Ibrahim."

The waiter brought their beer, put it down. Carl didn't seem to see it. "Go on! What was the row about?"

"Can't you guess? Women come out of that fellow Artz's *clinique* like fiery furnaces. If anyone gets in their way, Lord help them! Someone got in the princess's way. Hence the row."

"Give it me straight, please," said Carl. And his big baritone voice had an unusually deep sound in it.

"I will. See here!" And Van Deyn gave it him straight. . . . "And she nearly shrieked the house down. And when Artz was taking her away she fought not to go. The Egyptian chap who was the cause of all the yelling never said a word, not one word. But he gave her Mahomet's hell—is there a hell in the Mohammedan religion?—with his eyes. I guess they burned her some. Then he turned round—when Artz had got her away, and her screaming was dulled by two or three shut doors—and said to Miss Iselle, 'I apologize to you, mademoiselle, for this absurd interruption of our game. They say Dr. Artz has the secret of a marvelous cocktail. I fear the princess must have learned too much about that secret tonight. Shall we go on playing now?' But Miss Iselle—she was horribly upset—only said 'Good night' and went off to her bedroom. She must have been near crying, but she didn't cry. And she's still in the *pension,* but cut by everyone except me and the boys."

Carl Fügler's face became savage, and his bumpy brows were lined with a frown. "Cut! What do you mean?"

"That Miss Iselle is being cut by everyone, except Madame Müller, who has stood by her fine. You see it seems that Khalil was giving Miss Iselle a lesson in billiards and had both his hands—they show up, you see, because they're pretty near the color of coffee—on hers, when— Where are you going? What in hell's the matter? Fügler!"

But Carl was off down the crowded room, pushing roughly through the crowd, and out through the swing door into the black night of rain.

"That damned Artz! That damnable Artz!" he muttered to himself as he went. He had a rain-coat and he pulled up the collar mechanically as he strode along past the great open space which stretches on the farther side of the tram lines opposite to the Bellevue Cinema, but he was scarcely conscious of the evil weather. The Hagenbeck circus was established on the waste ground in a gigantic tent surrounded by smaller tents and brightly painted caravans. The dull roar of wild beasts came to Carl in the night as he hurried towards the Stadt Theater.

He did not know that he heard it. He wasn't conscious of the roaring of beasts. But there passed through his mind the thought, "Life is full of animalism, of savagery. If anything pure and remote shows its face the human animal sees it as a prey."

When he reached Madame Müller's he leaped up the stone staircase and pressed the electric bell by the door.

Hedwig opened it, began to smile when she saw Carl, suddenly looked very solemn and stared. Carl pulled off his streaming rain-coat, hung it hastily on a hat-stand in the corridor, and said in German-Swiss,

"I want to see Madame Müller. Where is she?"

"I'll see, sir. I'll find her. She's in."

"Is Mademoiselle Iselle anywhere about?"

The maid looked still more solemn. "Mademoiselle is in her bedroom, sir."

Carl made a movement as if to rush somewhere, checked himself abruptly. "Take me to Madame Müller, please, Hedwig."

The *pension* was enjoying its evening. Although shaken almost to its foundations by the tremendous events which had culminated in the abrupt departure of its shining lights, the prince and the princess, it was endeavoring to play chess, draughts, bridge, patience; was listening to a gramophone with Caruso records; was knitting, crocheting, and gossiping busily in and out of corners. Smiles and expressions of portentous gravity alternated on its lips, and its many heads, mostly gray-

haired, wagged over the choicest morsels. Carl Fügler passed by like a great savage let loose on it from some distant sphere where *pensions* are not. His red scowl enveloped it, scorched it, condemned it, left it amazed and shivering.

Another of Miss Iselle's "men"! "What now? What next?"

Madame Müller was in her private sitting-room, seated before a big bureau doing some accounts, when Hedwig knocked and Carl Fügler filled up the doorway.

"Herr Fügler!"

Carl was in the room with a stride. "I must see you for a minute, Frau Müller. May I shut the door?" Hedwig was blotted out.

Carl grasped Madame Müller's hand. "Of course you stood by her against those beasts!"

"Beasts—Herr Fügler!"

He waved a large hand. "Those old beasts out there! The boarders, whatever you call them. Did you turn those two out?"

He still had fast hold of her hand.

"Do you mean—"

"The princess and that Egyptian fellow, Khalil—whatever he calls himself! Did you?"

"I told the prince it would be better if he left. The princess said if he went she would—and so—"

"Great! I admire you! You are a fine creature!"

Madame Müller blushed faintly. "Pauline had done nothing wrong."

"Of course not! But now those beasts cut her. Harry Van Deyn told me. Can I see her?"

"She is in her room, I think," said Madame Müller rather doubtfully.

"Could you tell her I am here—with you?"

His strong eyes commanded her. She got up slowly.

"Yes, I could. It is only—"

"Only what?"

"You see—my boarders—after all that has happened—"

As if compelled Madame Müller went out of the room,

leaving Carl. He stood up stiffly where he was with his hands in his pockets and his big red lips pressed tightly together. His steady eyes were fixed on the door. In a moment it opened and Madame Müller came in followed by Pauline. He was astonished by her calmness. She held out a steady hand, and her clear singer's voice was steady. She was saying her "Yea" to life. That puzzled him. Now he felt a new hardness in her.

"I heard—I came just to—" Madame Müller shut the door softly and went to her bureau. "Pauline, can I do anything for you?"

"No, really. There is nothing the matter."

"I know Madame Müller is always your friend—"

"Pauline knows that, too," said Madame Müller.

"Yes—thank you," said Pauline, still in the steady voice.

"But these—these people here—"

"I don't mind them. I don't mind anything."

Carl stood staring at her. His eyes had their curious inward expression, as if they were busy tracking thoughts far down in some hidden place.

"No? But I want you anyhow to know—" He broke off. For once in his life he looked gravely embarrassed. "I cannot do anything—at present?"

"No, really. But there is nothing the matter. It is only Madame Müller who need be vexed."

"Dear child! I am not vexed."

"But you have lost—"

"I am very glad they are gone, *very* glad."

"Good night, Herr Fügler. Thank you for coming." She held out her hand again. As Carl looked at it he saw a coffee-colored hand closing round it.

"You are—you are really glad *he* is gone—that—that Egyptian fellow?" Pauline nodded. "You did not want him to stay?"

For the first time since she had come into the room Pauline blushed in her childish way. "No, I didn't. Not at all!"

Carl wrung her hand. "Good night, Miss Pauline."

A moment later he was out once more in the rain. and

walking rapidly till he arrived at the corner on the hill in Krabühlstrasse, and turned at right angles to the left. Here, facing a large piece of grass-covered land as yet unbuilt over, was the long and tall railing of handsome ironwork which protected Artz's domain from the road. As Carl skirted it he saw light in a window above the front door. And two tall standard lamps in the garden, on either side of the big pillared porch, gleamed brightly over the graveled space between the house and the iron gateway with its ornamentation of gold. An important house, almost a mansion, in an important garden with terraces, glass houses, a gardener's dwelling, a garage.

Carl thrust out a hand, gripped the iron gate, swung it open, passed in, trampling over the shining wet gravel, mounted the steps to the portico and pressed the electric bell. After two or three minutes a footman dressed in a dark blue livery with brass buttons opened the door, showing behind him a lighted and carpeted hall. Carl eyed him with savage disgust. "Is Dr. Artz in?" he asked.

"Have you an appointment, sir?"

"No—no. I have not come as a patient. But I know Dr. Artz and he knows me. My name is Fügler. Just tell him that Carl Fügler has called and asks to see him."

"Very well, sir." The footman was evidently impressed by Carl Fügler's determined manner. He shut the front door. "If you will wait here a minute I will ask the Herr Doktor."

He was about to leave Carl, then stopped and said, "Let me take your rain-coat, sir."

Carl gave it to him and he laid it carefully on a small chair close to the door. Then he walked softly over the carpet and disappeared behind a carved staircase which led to the upper floor. Only when he was gone and Carl was alone did he become aware of a soft and distant, but quite distinct sound.

Someone was practicing on a violin in the distance. He heard a rather intricate passage carefully played, repeated, repeated in sections, then played over more authoritatively from start to finish. Then once more it was begun, but after the first three notes the player broke off and there was silence.

"He has had my message," said Carl to himself, grimly.

The footman came back. "Please to come this way, sir. The Herr Doktor is coming in a moment."

He led Carl to the end of the hall, opened a door on the right and showed him into a large drawing-room, turning on four electric lights which were placed in the four corners of the coffered ceiling, and were shaded with amber-tinted glass. The big room was bathed in a soft glow which was neither red nor yellow.

"Please sit down, sir." And again he went away.

There were several pictures in the room. One was an Israels. Another was a very fine copy of "La belle Zélie" by Ingres. There were four delicate pastels showing nude women in various charming attitudes. There were also two oil portraits of women in modern dress, one wearing a smart little hat. The one in the smart little hat he recognized. She was Artz's third wife. She was almost strangely fair. The other woman, too, was fair but not absolutely blonde. Fair women! Carl thought of Pauline. The blonde woman was almost as fair as Pauline and had something of Pauline's rather childlike, detached look. These women had doubtless both lived in this house as its mistress.

The large gilded mahogany door opened and Dr. Artz walked in, pushing, it seemed, the front part of his body forward as if with intention, and holding in one hand the bow of a violin. He was dressed in a loose black velvet smoking suit ornamented with a lot of black braid, and a loose yellow silk shirt, with soft double cuffs fastened by ruby links. He looked emotional.

Coming up with his deliberate walk to Carl Fügler he said: "Good evening, Herr Fügler. I was practicing my part in Dvorak's quartet in G minor. We play it tomorrow at Herr Friedleben's house. Do you know it?"

"Cannot say I do!" said Carl bluntly.

Dr. Artz had made a slight movement as if to hold out his hand to his visitor. But he checked it unostentatiously, seeing that Carl evidently didn't think it necessary to shake hands.

"Sit down, if you like," he said. "What is it you want of me? Do you wish to consult me as a patient—out of hours?"

"You will never have me as a patient, Herr Doktor."

"No? You look very well." Artz's small black eyes examined Carl with serene acuteness. "You are a neurotic, but you look very well."

"A neurotic! What do you mean by that?"

"Do you wish a lecture from me on neurosis?"

"No," said Carl, roughly. "It is too late tonight for a lecture. And anyhow if I am a neurotic I can still see clearly into what is happening around me. You are doing harm here, Herr Doktor, and I felt it was time someone told you so. That is why I called on you tonight."

"Will not you sit down?"

"I do not care whether I stand or sit. I—"

"Well then, let us sit. I have been working hard today. These are comfortable chairs."

"Oh, everything here is comfortable. One can see that!"

"You think it would be more suitable if everything were uncomfortable?" Artz sat down, deliberately, in an armchair, leaned back and crossed his feet. He still held the violin bow in one hand.

"That is not my affair. I do not care how you live. Your private life is not my business at present."

"No, I suppose not. So you have not called to protest against my private life?" The emotional look which Carl Fügler had noticed on Artz's face when he came into the room had died out entirely now. It must surely have been caused by the effort he had been making in music when Carl arrived. An expression of cool, slightly sardonic humor, mingled with a faint self-complacency, had taken its place. "But even if you had I should not have resented it," he added. "You interest me, Herr Fügler. You have always interested me."

"Why should I interest you?" said Carl, contemptuously. "*I* am not impotent."

"You think I can only be interested in those who have lost their powers?"

"Medically!"

"And outside of medicine?"

"Oh—outside of medicine! Well, I am not a pretty woman!"

"You think only the old, the impotent, and pretty women can gain my interest?"

"It seems so."

"Seems? To whom does it seem?"

"To all Zurich, I should think."

"Indeed! Am I to suppose that all Zurich is concerned about me?"

"Are not you the most famous doctor here? Do not people come to you from other countries to be made young? Have you not got a factory up here behind the Dolder for turning out old men and old women semi-young, hybrid young, lusty, lustful, eager to fall upon youth and devour it? Are you not enticing all the finished and half-finished ones to your factory? It seems like it to me. I do not know very many of them. My friends are mostly young like myself, and neither finished nor on the way to it yet. But even among those I do know, or have met, you are picking them up pretty busily, Herr Doktor. Monsieur Meyer is a patient of yours, I believe. Princess Teresco is only just out of your factory. Mademoiselle Vyvyan—you have been at her, too. Anyone can see that."

"Indeed! Have you seen it so plainly?"

An angry red came on Carl Fügler's strong face. "I have! And—and now my maestro—" Carl stopped short. His eyes had become fiery, his face looked threatening.

"Well, what about your maestro, Herr Fügler?"

"He is too good for you, a thousand times."

"Too good? In what way exactly is he too good? Is it your meaning that Monsieur Marakoff is too good to be made better?"

"*You* cannot make him better."

"Do you mean physically or morally?"

"*Herr Gott!* Physically, physically! You do not turn them out of your factory more moral than they go in. Everyone knows that."

"Their morals are not my concern. My concern is to give them back powers that they have lost. You condemn me for doing that?"

"You try to change, frustrate—call it what you like—the processes of nature. That is impossible and—"

"If it is impossible why make a fuss about my trying to do it? If it is impossible I am only a fool who undertakes and fails in his undertaking. If my attempt is wicked my failure can only be a benefit. If it succeeded there might be some reason for your anger against me, but if I am, as you say, a failure I can see no *raison d'être* in your anger. So what is all this about?"

"I say you turn out half-failures, half-successes, and that these half-failures, half-successes, are disgusting and dangerous."

"Are you thinking of some special cases?"

"Yes, I am."

"This interests me, Herr Fügler. I am glad you have called tonight. The opinion of youth is often worth having."

"Youth has nothing to do with what I am saying."

"Well, youth is saying it."

"Anyhow I know what my friends think of what you are doing."

"But we are getting away from those special cases! Was it a special case which led you to visit me tonight?"

"Yes, it was. I have been at the Bellevue Bar. I met a friend of mine there. He told me what happened last night at Madame Müller's *pension*."

"Ah!"

"A disgusting, filthy scene brought about by you."

"I! What had I to do with causing such a scene? Did I take part in it beyond being there by chance?"

"Chance! I do not believe you ever do anything by chance." Carl stared down at Dr. Artz, who was still seated in the comfortable armchair, with his short legs crossed, his body protruding, and the violin bow held across his knees.

"I was here at home. Princess Teresco called and begged

me to come with her to the *pension* as someone was ill there. Could I refuse?"

"Ill! That Egyptian fellow ill!"

"It seems he was not indeed very ill, but how could I know?"

"Because I am young you take me for a great fool, Dr. Artz. Do you know that your renewed princess, the woman you have just turned out of your factory with her vices tuned up to what they call concert pitch, might easily have ruined a girl by what happened last night? If it had not been that Madame Müller puts right before interest—"

"You are speaking of Mademoiselle Iselle? It is because of her that you are here tonight? Ah! I begin to understand."

"What do you mean? What do you understand?" said Carl. And his voice sounded like a threat.

"Your deep interest in my patients struck me, I must confess, as curious seeing that you are a singer not a medical man. But if a young lady enters into this matter, of course it is very easy to comprehend that any young man might take an interest."

"I am not *any* young man," said Carl, with savage emphasis, beginning to gesticulate with his large open-air hands. "I am Carl Fügler. Kindly leave my individuality alone and do not bang me down with every young fool who is prompted or governed by sex. There is no question of sex here."

"No?"

"I say *no!* And you will be good enough to believe my word and take what I say as true. I am not a liar. And now I shall tell you what you have done. And no doubt it applies to plenty of your cases besides this one. You got hold of a woman who I should say had quite enough of a certain quality before you ever went near her."

"What quality? This is really interesting." The puffed-out body leaned slightly forward in its chair.

"The sexual quality!"

"Your expressions are scarcely scientific, if I may venture to criticize."

"I do not care whether they are scientific or not. You know perfectly well what I mean. You got hold of this woman—"

"Just excuse me! Are you speaking of Princess Teresco?"

"Of course I am!"

"Thank you. One likes to be quite clear about what is intended."

"You get hold of this woman, already made uneasy by belated desires—"

"What is that?"

"Belated desires, I said!" Carl reiterated, making his big voice suddenly louder. "Fiends that linger on beyond their proper season, their natural season, desires that ought to be dead by now."

"You are raising a question that admits of debate."

"This is not a debate. I am telling you what you have done."

"But surely I must know that!"

Carl suddenly dropped down into a chair and leaned forward with his eyes level with the small eyes of Dr. Artz.

"Whether you know it or not, Herr Doktor, I choose to tell you. Then you will understand once for all that what you are doing here in Zurich is fully comprehended by at any rate some of us. You got hold of this woman—she is rich, no doubt, like most of those who come to you from other countries—already tormented by desires which ought to be dead in one of her age, and you did things to her, *piqûres* and finally an operation in your rejuvenation factory, that increased those desires till they became a *furia*."

"Are you Italian-Swiss?"

"No. But that is the word for it—*furia!* She came out of your factory in what I call a condition of mania, owing to you. And the consequence of that beastly mania was the scene at the *pension* last night. And the result of that scene is that an innocent girl, who doesn't even understand properly all this beastliness, has been cut by everybody in the *pension,* and if it hadn't been that Madame Müller is a splendid little woman might easily have been sent away from it with her

reputation ruined. And it is owing to you." Dr. Artz opened his lips to say something but Carl Fügler stopped him with a violent gesture. "Wait a minute! I have not done yet. You have got another patient, ever so much older than Princess Teresco."

"And who is that?"

"Monsieur Meyer."

"What about him, if you please?"

"You know old Meyer is here to be your patient. You know you have been treating him for weeks. You know you have been operating on him in your rejuvenation factory. You know *why* all this has been, and is being, done."

"Why?"

"For an abominable reason that I do not choose to mention even to you. It is quite enough that I know it. I know it, I tell you. I know why old Meyer is here, and so do you." Carl got up. "Beastliness is not always illegal in a world that has plenty of beastliness in it, but that does not change anything. I suppose you call the cases you send out of your factory—"

"My *clinique,* if you please, Herr Fügler!"

"—cures, do you not? Well, I came here to tell you that many, perhaps most, of your cures demand victims. You do not care, of course. You are making money. The police cannot touch you for what you are doing. But I say that the feeling youth has against you is fully justified—fully. And you are not going to be allowed to make victims of those who have protectors. After all, the world is not entirely in the hands of the cynics. There are others. And if cynics like you, scientific cynics, attack, be sure there will be defenders. Strong ones, too, who are not afraid of you. Now I have told you what I came to tell you, and I will go out of your house."

With an abrupt movement Carl went towards the door of the drawing-room. Dr. Artz got up quickly and followed him. "I will see you out," he said, politely.

Carl muttered something and plunged forward. But Dr. Artz was nimble on his feet and kept close to him through the large hall. At the front door Carl was forced to stop. He thrust

out a hand to the handle. As he got hold of it he heard Artz say just behind him, "One moment, Herr Fügler, before you leave me!"

Carl pulled the heavy door open. The wind came to them and the smell of the rain, which they could see falling between the two lighted lamps.

"I have something to say to you." The guttural voice had become imperative. Carl turned round reluctantly.

"Well, what is it?"

"You have no need to worry about Monsieur Meyer, no need at all. He will not claim a—what you choose to call a victim, I assure you! And I am in a position to know! Set your mind quite at ease about that. Good night."

Why was he smiling?

Carl Fügler wondered uneasily as he plunged out into the darkness and rain.

XXVIII

MARAKOFF kept his promise to Dr. Artz. He had become one of Dr. Artz's ever increasing number of patients, followed his directions faithfully and underwent the mysterious *piqûres* without knowing what substances were being introduced into his body. Dr. Artz had told him that with him the renewing process must not be hurried, that he must be patient, must have faith in the eventual complete success of the experiment which was being made on him, and—the doctor laid great stress on this—must not make any attempts to find out whether he was progressing until permission was given.

Dr. Artz was not one of those practitioners who treat all patients in much the same sort of way. His treatments on the contrary were varied. Some were simple, some were elaborate. The process with Marakoff was elaborate. Knowing of course the state of the maestro's finances Artz insisted on treating him free of charge. The understanding between them was

that when Marakoff was given back his voice, and with it his power of earning large sums of money, he would pay the doctor his fee. Meanwhile Marakoff was under an obligation to Dr. Artz. He was in his hands as a patient. He was also in his hands as a debtor. But Dr. Artz was very amiable with him in the latter capacity.

"The advertisement to me, when your voice is restored through me, will be so great," he said, "that the money question won't be of importance. But all the same when you are in a position to pay I shall ask you to pay."

"Of course I will pay you," said Marakoff, "if I get back my voice I can make another fortune. I am strong. I am not really old yet. There will still be time."

"But remember!" said Dr. Artz emphatically, "no experiments with the voice until I give the permission. You can live in hope. But time is necessary for attainment of our end. Experiments—I forbid them."

Marakoff was not accustomed to obedience. The only obedience he had known during the greater part of his life had been obedience to his own whims. But with Dr. Artz now he was strangely submissive. He hoped so much from Artz.

Artz was not guided by the delicacy of mind and perception that belongs to refined natures. He had no scruple in reminding Marakoff of the great sacrifice he had made. "Do not forget, Marakoff," he said more than once, "that on account of you I have lost a great chance of publicity. And not that alone! No! I shall make a great enemy on your account. For you I have failed in my duty, in my trust, as a doctor to Mr. Meyer. He is a vindictive man. When he finds it out, he will revile me. And this will be because of you. Do not forget that."

"When will he know?" asked Marakoff, on the first occasion when this not too pleasant statement was made to him.

"Very soon. Too soon!" said Dr. Artz very gravely.

Marakoff received at that moment a strange impression. For the first time since he had known him he had the feeling that in certain circumstances Artz might feel fear.

Artz was surely dreading the moment when Meyer would be

forced to the realization that what Artz had promised him had not been performed. And this dread had arisen through his—Marakoff's—insistence on the bargain between him and Artz.

Artz must feel very sure of success in the undertaking of the voice. Otherwise he would never have burned the Meyer boats. When he thought of that Marakoff exulted. But his very exultation made him the more subservient to Artz. The big man really put himself under a yoke for the first time in his life, under the yoke of Dr. Artz.

Carl Fügler not only looked observant, he was intensely observant. And where his heart was engaged his power of observation was increased.

After his interview with Artz in the house in Krabühlstrasse he felt a fiercer hatred of Artz. The fact of having told Artz his opinion of him made Carl feel that his opinion was even more definite than before. He had a youthful longing, not only to criticize, not only to oppose with words, but to pass on to deeds; he had a longing to fight Artz. And now he knew that his beloved maestro had become one of Artz's patients.

Marakoff did not tell Carl this. Carl found it out. The finding out wasn't difficult. There was a lot of the child still in Marakoff and it began to show itself now. As the guilty child physically wriggles and squirms under the eyes of authority, so Marakoff moved in mental uneasiness under the steady gaze of Carl Fügler. For the first time since they had come together there was between them a sense of strain. They were no longer close to each other. A gap was opening and dividing them. On one side of it Marakoff stood with Dr. Artz. On the other was Carl. Alone? It seemed so.

The singing lessons still went on, but they were no longer the cheery musical orgies they had formerly been. The fun, the bluster, the eager intensity, the ruthless seriousness, the dramatic fire, which had been compressed into them and had made them wonderful, had fallen out of them like wine out of a turned-down glass. For the maestro was now alternately watchful, in the self-conscious sense, and absent-minded; and the pupil was watchful in another sense and youthfully critical. And that stern criticism of youth sears the no longer youthful.

Marakoff began to be aware how much Carl had respected him. That respect he was surely losing. But if the experiment succeeded? Then indeed he would be justified. Then Carl Fügler would listen, would know at last what manner of man his maestro really was, would realize the talent which he had never experienced but had known only by hearsay.

"When he hears me sing it will all come back!" Marakoff said to himself.

Carl, who was usually so savagely frank, especially with those whom he cared for, now kept all that was in his heart to himself. He had warned his maestro against Artz. Now his maestro was one of the Artz crowd. He withdrew into a restraint that was full of reserve. And as reserve was wholly unnatural to him he lost all his spontaneity when he was in the studio.

Marakoff and he had ceased to meet outside of it.

Carl's attitude to Marakoff, not understood by Pauline but felt, caused her attitude to change. Sometimes he saw her looking at him with questioning eyes. Sometimes she seemed to be asking him, "What's happening?" She was still absolutely subservient to him as a pupil. But he felt that if any question ever arose between him and Carl Fügler she would instinctively range herself on Carl's side. And yet, he believed, she wasn't in love with Carl.

She was in love with her singing. But even in that she was not quite so whole-hearted, so absolutely concentrated as she had been. Something had happened to disturb her—something perhaps was happening to disturb her more. And there was in her a slight new hardness.

Even in the studio there was heard the faint, but resolute, murmur of Mademoiselle l'Alouette's "Yea" to life.

But Marakoff knew nothing of what had happened at the *pension*. Carl had not told him. Pauline did not tell him. Artz was silent on the subject. Marakoff knew none of Madame Müller's boarders. And Princess Teresco had not revisited the studio. So matters were when in December Meyer after a stay in the south of Italy to convalesce after his slight operation, and to test results, returned to Zurich.

He had not written to Artz while away. He returned without letting Artz know he was coming. But no sooner was he again in his rooms at the Baur-au-Lac than he looked up Artz's number in the telephone book and then rang up the house in Krabühlstrasse.

Dr. Artz came in only when dark had fallen. The footman heard the motor and opened the front door. Artz came up under the portico wrapped in a big sable coat.

"What is it?" asked Artz, directly he looked at the footman.

"There has been a telephone message for you, Herr Doktor."

Artz stood still in the lighted hall. "Who telephoned?"

"Monsieur Leon Meyer from the Baur-au-Lac Hotel, Herr Doktor."

"Ah!" the word sounded heavy and deep in Artz's throat. After a pause Artz opened his coat and flung back the two sable-lined wings of it. "What was the message?"

"Monsieur Meyer wanted you to ring him up directly you returned, Herr Doktor. He said he would not leave the hotel. He specially wished you to ring directly."

"Ah!" said Artz again. And his small black eyes went to the telephone which was in the hall and close to where he was standing. After an instant of silence he added, "Take my coat, Heinrich." The footman drew off the heavy coat and moved to carry it away.

"It is my evening with the quartet," said Artz. He looked at his watch. "Not much time now. I cannot—"

At that moment the telephone bell rang. Dr. Artz started violently. The young footman went to take down the receiver. Artz stood still. His eyes were fixed on the telephone.

The footman listened. *"Hallo—ja?"*

Artz slipped over to him with soft-footed swiftness. "Do not say I am here," he whispered. "I—"

"No, monsieur! The Herr Doktor has not come back yet. . . . I expect him at any time, monsieur. . . ."

"Tell him you know I am engaged this evening!" whispered Artz. The footman nodded his fair pomaded head.

"The Herr Doktor is engaged early this evening, monsieur. He has his music . . . the quartet, monsieur . . . the quartet at . . ."

"Do not say where I shall be, you fool!" whispered Artz angrily.

"I do not know where he will be playing, monsieur. But I know the Herr Doktor will be out the whole evening."

"Say . . . 'till very late,'" whispered Artz.

"Until very late, monsieur . . ." The footman listened. His eyes went to his master—he listened.

"What is it?" whispered Artz.

The footman took his lips from the receiver. "The gentleman says he is coming here to wait till you return. He must see you before you go out again. He says he is starting now at once."

"Then I—"

"Very well, monsieur! But really, monsieur, I—" The footman put the receiver back and shrugged his broad shoulders. "The gentleman has rung off, Herr Doktor."

"And he is coming here?"

"Yes, Herr Doktor."

"Give me my coat, Heinrich." The footman went to fetch Artz's coat. "My hat!"

"Here it is, Herr Doktor."

Still frowning Artz went towards the front door.

"But when the gentleman comes," said the footman, "what shall I—"

"He can wait!" said Artz brutally. "If he waits all night I do not care. Give me my violin and my music case. Quick!"

Artz snatched the violin in its case and the music from him and hurried out of the house. The footman heard the sound of a motor from the garage. Lights shone out on the gravel. Then Artz's motor went softly, almost demurely, over the gravel, passed out through the iron gateway and disappeared.

The weekly quartet evenings of which Dr. Artz was so passionately fond were usually brought to an end punctually at eleven o'clock. Dr. Artz was often the first to give the signal

for breaking up. But that night he was extraordinarily conversational. When eleven o'clock struck he had still much to say, which drew the whole party into violent discussion. The clocks of Zurich sounded midnight while still the ardent musicians were loudly talking, and Herr Pfeiffer, the first violin, exclaimed:

"Twelve o'clock! My wife will think—what will she not think?"

"Twelve o'clock! Twelve o'clock!"

Everyone was in movement.

"It is your fault, Artz!" said genial Herr Friedleben. "You are such a devil to talk tonight. Never have I heard you so full of talk. And you who never forget the hour!"

"And who did not forget the hour tonight either!" said Artz to himself grimly, as he woke up his chauffeur and got into his car.

He sat back and stared out of the window. This part of the city looked deserted. The big houses showed no lights, the roads no passers-by. Zurich was sleeping. And Meyer was surely sleeping, too, or preparing for sleep in his apartment at the Baur-au-Lac.

But tomorrow would come swiftly. And then? At any rate he had the night.

The motorcar stopped before his door, between the two lamps. As Artz got out he stared at his house like one asking a question. He had a latch-key and had put his hand into his pocket to get it when the front door was opened by Heinrich.

"That gentleman from the Baur-au-Lac is still here, mein Herr, waiting for you."

Artz took Heinrich by the arm and gripped him with such savage force that he tried to get away.

"You damned fool! What do you mean by letting him stay? How dare you let anyone stay on in my house till after midnight without my permission?"

"But the gentleman would not go, Herr Doktor. I tried to—"

"Where is he?"

The footman pointed in the direction of the drawing-room door. Artz turned away, took two or three steps, stood still with his back to the footman, then walked slowly down the hall to the drawing-room door, opened it and went in. The footman heard him say:

"Welcome back to our Zurich, Monsieur Leon!"

Then the door closed behind him.

As Artz came into the drawing-room Meyer, who had been sitting in the corner of a large sofa under the pretty pastels of naked women, got up slowly. He was dressed in a loose gray traveling suit, in which his body looked meager. His unwrinkled face was pale as parchment. The two scars close to his ears looked livid. There was a sort of sick fury in his eyes. Without holding out his hand or any greeting he stood in front of Artz and said:

"Artz, you are a liar, a cheat, a charlatan. Your science is only a pretense. You know no more than any little doctor in a county village knows. You are a pompous bulging sham. You are a miserable money-maker who gives nothing in return for the money you suck out of your patients. Your experiments—your discoveries—your marvelous new treatments—there is nothing in them. They mean nothing. They lead nowhere. Nothing at all happens because of them except this, that you get money through them. As to your operations"—for a moment the meager body in the loose gray suit shook violently—"how dare you perform useless operations? How dare you make me submit to—" The little body was still again.

Meyer turned away abruptly, walked down the big room with his hands behind him and his almost bald Jewish head thrust forward, turned and came back. He passed Artz without looking at him or seeming to know he was there, turned and once more walked down the room towards the door. His eyes had an inhuman appearance that was startling. The animal can often be detected in man. The reptile at this moment was definitely apparent in Meyer.

For once Artz seemed at a loss. His self-possession, his audacity, had ebbed away. He stood still, almost humbly waiting on Meyer's fury, a fury which had apparently carried Meyer into a region of embarrassing solitude. His small black eyes followed the moving figure furtively, and when it came close to him looked down and away from it.

Presently, when the situation was becoming grotesque and almost unbearable, Meyer stopped and again showed consciousness of Artz. "But I shall not let this go on," he said. And suddenly his face became red and puffy. "You made a mistake when you pushed your fingers into my money bags. Your greed led you into a bad mistake. You should have gone on choosing mild fools to fill your *clinique*. I shall punish you for making a fool of me. I understand you, Artz. You rely on the moral cowardice of those who come to you. You bank on that! You have banked on that with me. You thought I should be like the rest of them, ashamed to say what I had wished for, why I put myself into your hands. 'Old people, important people, don't care to lose their dignity in the world's eyes. Meyer will be like the others I have swindled. He'll never let anyone know. That was your conviction, of course."

A strong lisp had come into his speech, and his usually dry lips showed a spray of saliva.

"But I shall stop your swindling, Artz. Perhaps you think I can't do that, as there are so many fools in the world, and you know it better than most men, being a doctor. But there is a very simple way of doing it, of bringing your incompetence and charlatanry into the good glare that will make even your eyes blink—publicity. I mean to prosecute you, Artz, for getting money out of me on false pretenses, and performing on me an entirely useless operation. You have made a fool of me. I give you that. But I shall punish you, Artz."

"Do you really mean that my treatment has not been successful?" said Artz, speaking at last and with a manner of genuine surprise. It seemed that he had suddenly recovered his self-possession under the influence of a direct threat.

"It has not! It has not! It has not—you ignoramus!"

Artz stared at Meyer as if in deep meditation. "You tell me there has been no result?"

"No result at all! You knew there could not be." As he said this Meyer surprised in Artz's eyes one of those strange fleeting looks which even the cleverest human beings seem impotent to conceal, however strongly they wish to remain enigmatic, one of those looks which reveal.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, and his voice completely changed. It had been a harsh accusing voice. Now it was a startled keen voice, vibrating with some new and intense feeling. "Ah—you intended there should be no result!"

Now Artz in his turn was startled. "What do you mean, Monsieur Meyer? I, a doctor with a reputation to take care of—I intend my treatment of such a patient as you to be a failure! What absurdity!"

But Meyer was in possession of that look. "I have made a mistake," he said. "My instinct about you hasn't betrayed me as I believed it had. I thought you a competent man, a man who could do his job. I felt so convinced of your competence that your failure with me astounded me. But there was the fact—that you had completely failed. Tell me the reason! I will have the reason!"

"I don't know what you mean. There is no reason."

"There is!"

Suddenly Meyer's eyes seemed to be attracted to the drawing-room wall, for he looked away from Artz, half turning—as if called. He saw the two portraits of women—of Artz's former wives. He gazed at them. He went nearer. He examined them with absorbed attention—the two fair women, both young, both with something childlike about them. Artz watched him, and an uneasy expression showed in his face, but he let Meyer look, did nothing to interrupt him. At last Meyer turned round.

"You are very clever," he said. "But you are not all clever. Perhaps no man is. If you were you would not have left those two portraits hanging in a room used by your visitors—just now. They show your taste in women too plainly. They give

you away. I understand now. You are not a charlatan. You are simply a doctor who puts women before his patients, who cares for them more than he cares for his profession, his prospects, or even his money-making. You have not chosen to treat me properly, you scoundrel! You have not done what you could have done, and I understand why now. Miss Iselle!"

"That is absolutely false!" exclaimed Artz.

"It's true. Since Miss Iselle has been here in Zurich you have fallen in love with her, and because of that you have not dared to succeed with my case."

"Monsieur Meyer, you must have gone crazy to take such an idea into your head!"

Meyer held up both his thin hands as if in angry command. "Wait!" he exclaimed, on a shrill note.

"What is it?" said Artz, and again he showed an uneasiness very rare in him.

"D'you know that Miss Iselle is entirely in my hands?"

"Miss Iselle has a father and mother."

"Paupers! Useless people! People who can do nothing whatever for her. They have handed her over to me."

"Do you mean that you stand to Miss Iselle *in loco parentis?"* asked Artz, with the flicker of a smile, which Meyer did not miss.

"No, not at all! But Miss Iselle can only stay on here in Zurich if I choose to go on paying for her. If I withdraw the allowance I make her she must leave at once and go back to lodging-house life with her moneyless parents. Now, Artz, make no mistake about this. You have tricked me and I know why. It was because of that girl. Very well! I shall withdraw the generous allowance I make to Miss Iselle and she will have to leave here. No more lessons with Marakoff! No more duets with that student with the baritone voice! All chance of singing in opera over! And good-by to Zurich—and Dr. Artz! Ah! What do you say now?"

"All that has nothing to do with me," said Artz coolly. "My only concern is about your state of health and condition of body."

Meyer gave vent to a faint laugh, a laugh that sounded bloodless. "You care so much about that, *Dr.* Artz!"

"Naturally I care. I have my reputation as a doctor to think of."

"But your reputation as a conquering lover! What about that?" said Meyer, pointing at the two portraits. "Your harem is empty just now, isn't it?"

"My time is too much taken up for me to—"

But Meyer interrupted him with brutality. "What is the good of this pretense?" he exclaimed. "Your life is governed by women, and so is mine and always has been."

"I deny that I allow my life to be governed, as you call it," said Artz, with sudden hauteur.

"Very well! Then I am to leave Zurich, as I came to it, and take Miss Iselle away with me?"

"Why not—if Miss Iselle consents to go?" said Artz, again faintly smiling.

"What is that? She will have to go!" Artz raised his eyebrows and said nothing. "Tell me how she is to stay on here without a penny."

"Marakoff might help her. He earns money."

"Barely enough to live on."

"Perhaps—presently—he may earn more than that."

"Are you doing something to Marakoff?" said Meyer, with a sudden flare of intense suspicion.

"Wait and you will know!" said Artz. Arrogance blazed up in him abruptly, a fierce flame of arrogance. "You will know, and everyone will know, whether I am a charlatan or not. You have insulted the doctor in me tonight, Monsieur Meyer, because you are ignorant, ignorant as a child, of my powers."

"Then prove them on *me.*"

Artz gave him a queer and sinister look. "Perhaps I was wrong to try—with *you,*" he said, in a soft voice.

"Why?" exclaimed Meyer.

"Perhaps it was too late. A doctor can be too optimistic."

Meyer's thin body seemed to shrink slightly in the gray traveling suit, as if it cowered under the shock of an unex-

pected blow. He looked suddenly older. Old age seemed to flow over him, a tide of old age, coming up from some hidden source and engulfing him. "You—you devil, Artz!" he said, in a feeble voice. "You devil, Artz!"

"I can only do what is possible. I will speak quite frankly to you. Subterfuge is no use in certain cases. I always knew you were a forlorn hope. But I did honestly think there was a hope for you. And so I tried. You say I have failed. If so it is because I tried too late."

"You devil, Artz!" Meyer was shaking slightly—just a faint trembling of the whole body. But in spite of the sudden change in him there was still tremendous vitality in his eyes. Will was there, in them, sleepless and vicious will, ready to attack. "I shall take Miss Iselle away from here."

"Will she go?"

"She must go."

"That is not my affair, Monsieur Meyer."

"And I shall prosecute you."

"Because you are too old and I was foolish enough not to discover it? That will be one of the strangest cases that have ever been tried, I should think."

Meyer opened his lips. It was evidently his intention to say something. But only a long sigh came from him, a sigh that was heartrending. He lifted his right hand and pointed with it at Artz. Again he opened his lips. But this time nothing came, not even a sigh.

"Are you ill, Monsieur Meyer?" asked Dr. Artz, with sudden solicitude. "Let me—"

"No, no!" said Meyer, softly.

He turned away, went feebly to the door, followed by Artz, opened the door and passed out into the hall.

His coat and hat were lying on a chair with a walking stick. He bent and got hold of them.

"Let me help you—"

"No, no."

"But where is your car? You cannot walk home at this time of night."

"I—shall."

He made a gesture to the front door. Artz was obliged to open it. Directly it was open Meyer went out of the house without saying another word. He looked at Artz as he passed by him. His feeble steps sounded on the gravel between the two lamps. The sound of them died away.

Then Artz shut the big door. When he had done that he stood for a moment in the hall.

"I wonder if I have done the wrong thing." he said to himself.

XXIX

"PAULINE," said Madame Müller, on the following morning just before the midday meal, at the *pension,* "there is someone at the telephone for you."

Pauline looked startled.

"Who is it, madame?"

"I don't know, my dear."

The girl went away slowly, and as if reluctantly, down the passage to the little room where the telephone was.

"Perhaps she is afraid it's the prince!" Madame Müller thought.

And that was the truth of Pauline's reluctance, but when she asked through the telephone who was speaking a frail, ugly voice, oddly toneless and exhausted in timbre, replied:

"Is that Miss Iselle?"

"Yes."

"Oh, good morning. I am Leon Meyer."

Pauline's expression changed, but not to an expression of pleasure. Nevertheless she was slightly relieved. For now she was even more afraid of Khalil than of Meyer. His youth seemed to her to make him the more dangerous of the two in spite of her experience at the Baur-au-Lac.

"Yes, Mr. Meyer?" she said.

"I want to see you—as soon as possible. When can I see you?"

"I—I have a good deal to do today. I have a lesson—"

"I *must* see you today. Kindly suggest a time!"

"My lesson will be over at four, but—"

"Then I shall see you at four-thirty. Will you come to tea with me at the hotel?"

Pauline shook her fair head by the telephone. "I'm afraid I—"

"Oh," said the voice in the telephone, and there was a faint sound of acute irony in it, "you needn't be afraid. I'm not dangerous."

Pauline thought of Marakoff, one of her two "protectors." "Could you come to the studio, Mr. Meyer?"

"It's a private matter that I want to see you about."

"Could you tell me walking home from the studio?" And as she said it she thought: "Out-of-doors! I shan't mind it so much out of doors."

After a silence Meyer's voice said, "Very well, I will come to the studio today at four. Good-by."

"Good-by, Mr. Meyer."

That day at her lesson Pauline was oddly nervous and preoccupied. Marakoff noticed this, but he said nothing until at five minutes to four Pauline finished a rendering of Berlioz's King of Thule song from his "Faust." Then the artist in him could no longer keep silence, and he exclaimed:

"That is not it! No! No! Do not you see, feel, that such music must be sung strangely, with an other-world timbre? Like this!" said Marakoff. And then in a curious under voice such as Pauline had never before heard or imagined he murmured the beginning of the song, "There was a king once in Thule," etc.

"Like that! Like that it should go! What is the matter?" He saw tears shining in the silver-gray eyes. "What have I done?"

"Oh, maestro!" said Pauline, "if only you had your voice still! How you must have sung!"

Marakoff was deeply moved. "Wait, little girl, wait!" he said, and his voice was hoarse.

"Wait?"

"Yes. I tell you to wait! Now no more of this! No more! But *that* is how the King of Thule should be sung. Do not forget. Margaret is like *that* when she sings it."

There was a knock at the door. Marakoff turned towards it. *"Herein!"* he called. The door opened and Meyer appeared. How terribly old he looked! It was as if he had suddenly begun to crumble.

"May I come in for a moment?"

"Of course come in, Monsieur Leon," said Marakoff, with obvious constraint. But he frowned. "The lesson is finished. Mademoiselle Pauline, you can go." He added abruptly, "What is it?"

The embarrassment of the girl had called forth his question. Before she could reply to it Meyer had joined them.

He was wrapped up in a fur coat which, strangely, made him seem even smaller, more fleshless than usual, like a thing lost in its wrappings. There was a sleepless look in his eyes. It was impossible, when meeting their gaze, to conceive of them as veiled, immobile in sleep. In his white face without any lines they looked eternal, eyes that never could cease from the miserable and acute observation of life.

"Do not go, Miss Iselle," he said to Pauline.

"But the lesson is finished," said Marakoff.

"Well, then, I will drive Miss Iselle to her *pension*. My car is outside."

"Pauline would do much better to walk after her singing and breathe in fresh air."

"In that case I will walk with her to the *pension*," said Meyer inflexibly.

The eyes went to Fritz Rauch. Marakoff looked at Meyer like a man accepting a challenge. "Fritz, you can go," he said.

The young Mozart, whose fair face showed nothing but a sort of boyish earnestness and dewy-lipped concentration, immediately got up from the piano, bent his slight body in a

formal bow, gathered up some music and his soft fawn-colored hat, bowed again and gently departed.

Pauline was left alone with the two men. Knowing that Marakoff meant henceforth to teach her for nothing she wondered whether he had already told Meyer of his determination, and whether, if it were so, that was the cause of the present tension felt by her but not fully understood. In her mind with this question there lived a strange amazement. Was this the result of treatment by the famous Dr. Artz? Monsieur Meyer, she thought, looked years older than before he had become Artz's patient. He looked, to her young eyes, tragically old.

An uncomfortable silence was broken by Marakoff, who had been furtively examining Meyer. Yes, furtively—for suddenly the challenging expression had vanished from his face, as if chased away by a new, and ardent, preoccupation.

"Have you had a good journey?" he asked. "Do sit down, Monsieur Leon." Meyer took a chair. "You will not take off your coat?"

"That's not necessary. Yes, the journey was bearable."

There was another silence. Then Marakoff said: "You are not looking very well—after your operation."

"Artz is a charlatan!" said Meyer, with sudden startling intensity. "An infamous charlatan! A money-maker! A pseudo-scientist who knows nothing! An incapable!" He beat his thin hands on the arms of his chair. "An incapable!" he repeated. "An incapable! Or worse!"

He stared straight in front of him ferociously as if absorbed, drawn down in a depth of anger. Pauline looked at him with terror. There was something to her unholy in this outburst by an old man.

"Or worse!" said Meyer. "Worse! I have done with Artz!" He still went on staring into vacancy. "Or—no!" he added. "I have not done with Artz!"

His eyes went to Pauline. The expression in them frightened her. It was so greedy and hopeless. He continued to look at her for a moment in silence. Then he said, in a suddenly ice-

cold voice, now apparently including Marakoff with her in his observations,

"I had intended to speak in private about—" He broke off, then continued, "But as I am here, perhaps I may as well be explicit. Certain matters have taken a turn I didn't expect."

Now he looked at Marakoff and spoke to him only. "You know, Monsieur Marakoff," he said, "what a high opinion I have always had of your talent. I know a great artist when I hear him. You were one. But—" He paused. He seemed like a man picking his way. . . . "But singing and teaching are different matters. Originally there was a thought of—or rather a plan of sending Miss Iselle to be trained for opera at Milan, the great school of singing. Dr. Artz"—his voice quivered with intensity—"Dr. Artz concerned himself, unasked, in the matter. The plan was given up. Miss Iselle, on my responsibility, was brought here. That was a mistake. Now do not get angry, Marakoff!"

"I am not angry—not at all!"

"You are, I am sure, well endowed as a teacher, but the advantages existing in Milan are not to be found here. Since I have stayed here I have realized that. There are no other singers—to speak of—here. There is no school of students. There is, there can be, no spirit of emulation. Miss Iselle is a soprano. There are no tenors here for her to sing with. You have no good tenor pupils. This is unfortunate. I have been thinking it over"—his eyes became intensely expressive, ugly with expression—"and I have decided to withdraw Miss Iselle from here and to place her in Milan for future study. This I intend to do at once."

He paused and looked at Pauline. Her gray eyes were fixed upon him and held an expression of hard determination that he had not only never seen in them before, but never imagined they could hold.

"At once!" he repeated, in a rasping authoritative voice.

"Yes?" said Marakoff. "And what do you say, Pauline? Let us hear what the subject of these—kindly experiments has to say!"

"I don't want to go, please!" said Pauline in a low voice.

"Young people seldom know what is best for them," said Meyer, obviously trying to seem indifferent and casual, but incessantly betrayed by his eyes. "And in this case complete ignorance naturally cannot be allowed to be the arbiter. Once you are in Milan, my child"—Pauline slightly shivered at this paternal address, spoken in a voice that suddenly became hideously soft—"you will realize that it is the finest school for opera in all Europe."

"I'd rather stay here."

"You can't, I'm afraid," said Meyer, again in the harsh and rasping voice.

"Why not?" asked Marakoff.

"Why not? Because, as you know, I am responsible for Miss Iselle, and I take a different view from hers in the matter."

"We know you have been generous," said Marakoff, with a sort of strong calmness, "very generous."

"I feel—I feel very grateful to you, Mr. Meyer," said Pauline, speaking with a slow reluctance. "But—"

"Yes? Well?" said Meyer, violently.

"I can't accept any more money from you."

"Indeed! Then what are you going to do? Go home to live with your parents in Pimlico?"

"I believe in Pauline's talent," said Marakoff. "I will go on training her for nothing."

"Pauline! Pauline!" exclaimed Meyer, with a sort of gush of uncontrollable irritation. "Master and pupil seem to have become very intimate together. To me this young lady has always been Miss Iselle. Your offer is no doubt very gratifying to Miss Iselle, Monsieur Marakoff, but I am sure she would not care to profit by the generosity of a man who unfortunately, as we cannot help knowing, has lost everything he had. I happen to be well off, and therefore the obligation to me is negligible. Still I think Miss Iselle owes me at least this, after all that has happened, to listen to my advice and to do her best to accede to my wishes. I shall place Miss Iselle under the care of the best maestro in Milan."

"I can't go to Milan, Mr. Meyer," said Pauline. The soft sulky look had now come into her eyes, which unfortunately Meyer found desperately attractive. "You want to accept Mr. Marakoff's charity instead of mine?" said Meyer.

Pauline flushed all over her face. "I don't want to accept charity from anyone. But I would rather take it from Mr. Marakoff than from you—now."

"I tell you he can't afford to teach for nothing."

"Mr. Meyer," said Marakoff, with a fierce arrogance that was startling, "while you are in my studio I must ask you not to comment on private matters that only concern me. From today I shall teach this young lady for nothing. When she sings in opera—and she shall sing and successfully—she shall pay me for all my lessons. Meanwhile you and I have cleared our account."

Meyer, who had got up out of his chair and was holding now to the back of it with both hands, turned to Pauline. "And who, if I may ask, is going to pay all your living expenses in Zurich, Miss Iselle? Who will settle with Madame Müller? Who will—who will"—he hesitated as if ashamed by his own intention to speak certain words, but his anger overcame his hesitation and drove him on in spite of himself—"who will pay for your dresses, your music, your pleasures, the boating on the lake at night, the excursions? Even the tram fares up to the Naturheil-Verein, to the huts of the young nature-lovers up there—the young fellows who live according to nature, that is to say without troubling too much about the ordinary decencies of civilized life—even they have to be paid for by somebody. I ask who is—"

"Pauline, take your music and leave us!" The voice of Marakoff broke authoritatively through the torrent of speech.

"Why should she leave us? I am asking her—"

"Pauline, you will go—at once!" Without a word Pauline gathered up her music and left them. "No, Meyer! No! You are not going with her!"

"How dare you interfere with me? I shall do what I choose to do! No one shall—"

"No, Meyer!" Livid with passion, tottering with physical exhaustion brought on by the fierce feeling which his body was unable to match, Meyer tried to reach the door. But Marakoff simply went to stand in front of it. "You are not going with her, Meyer!"

Meyer stood before Marakoff trembling. "You are her lover, too! You are her lover!" he exclaimed. "You won't give her up because you are her lover."

"Don't talk nonsense to me!" exclaimed Marakoff contemptuously.

"I say you are her lover! That student, that Fügler, you and Artz, you are all—"

"What do you say about Artz?" exclaimed Marakoff, no longer contemptuous.

"I say that Artz is that girl's lover. I have proof of it!"

"What proof have you?"

"When a doctor denies his own talent, refuses the exercises of his own powers as a doctor, isn't that proof enough?"

"Ah—that is your proof."

Meyer was obviously startled by the tone and manner of Marakoff when he said that. "How do you understand so exactly what I mean?" he asked sharply.

For a moment Marakoff looked embarrassed. "Understand?" he said. "But you told me—"

"Not so much as you understand, not nearly so much! How do you know—"

"I know what you have told me. I understand you to mean that Artz—" Again he stopped speaking.

"How could you know? Did Artz tell you then? How do you come into this matter? What have you to do with it? It was entirely between Artz and myself."

"What is all this? What has Artz done?"

"But it seems that you know!" Meyer's suspicion flamed. "Then you are a confidant of Artz? He consults with you about what he is going to do, or not do, with his patients, with you, a teacher of singing! That is singular, surely!"

"Your imagination carries you away."

"How are you concerned with Artz in this? Be good enough to tell me."

"I have nothing to tell you!" said Marakoff sullenly.

"But I shall not go from here until I know. You prevented me from leaving just now. Things have changed. I stay here now, whether you wish it or not, till this matter is clear between us."

Marakoff looked down from the height of his great stature upon the fiercely persistent little old man whom a moment before he had been obliged to pity, in spite of the contemptuous disgust which was at the root of his feeling about him. He looked, and a strong gust of desire to be himself, his impetuously natural, even brutally natural self, swept over him.

"When you put that girl, Mademoiselle Iselle—Pauline—with me you put her with one who knows how to protect the voice God has given her," he said. "She is in that voice. Do you understand? A danger to her is a danger to her gift. You say I am her lover. It is not true. I am only her protector, the protector of a child—of a lark if you prefer it. You are not going to hurt her as you have hurt many other girls. That is certain. I have taken care of that. Now you know all that I shall ever tell you."

Meyer stood in his big fur coat looking infinitely small and shrunken, staring with his terribly vital lashless eyes up at Marakoff. "You made a bargain with Artz?" he said.

Marakoff did not answer, but he moved away heavily from the door.

"You made a bargain with Artz!" Meyer repeated. "But then what a fool you are! What a fool! Don't you know that you have been playing Artz's game in all this? You are saving that girl—for him! You may have been a great singer, Marakoff, but you are certainly not a clever man. You are not as clever as Artz!" He took his hat and his stick. "You are a boy in the hands of Artz!"

He opened the studio door and went out. An instant later Marakoff heard faintly the purr of his motor descending the hill towards the center of Zurich.

XXX

MEYER'S chauffeur was startled. As he drove down the hill towards the Baur-au-Lac he was thinking about the rich old man behind him in the limousine whom he had so often envied, and wondering what had just happened, what was even now happening in that body which suddenly looked so alarmingly old.

"That Dr. Artz ain't done 'im much good, that's certain," he thought, being English, and not unobservant. "If that's getting young, better stay as you are, I say!"

He was good friends with Meyer's Austrian valet, who told him everything he knew about Meyer, and who, having been with Meyer for over twenty years, was fairly well informed about the manias of his master.

When the car had reached the Bellevue Cinema and was making for the Quaibrücke the chauffeur heard a voice call out huskily. "Stop! Stop!" He applied the brakes and looked round. A livid face was up against the glass that divided him from his employer. "Go to the Eden Hotel—that way!"

Two or three minutes later he pulled up in front of the Eden Hotel.

Meyer got out, went into the hotel and asked for Miss Vyvyan. The hall porter said that she had just come in. Meyer sent up his card and asked to see her. While he waited he walked restlessly about the hall keeping his eyes on the ground. The hall porter and the chasseurs watched him enviously. His evidently absolute indifference to them and terrific self-absorption drew their attention. He looked as a man looks who is alone and talking to himself. But he was not talking. His face suggested that of a mummy. The flawless smoothness of it fought with the expression of his eyes and with the drooping uneasiness of his meager little body.

"Where is he?" said a voice. "Oh—there!"

And Miss Vyvyan came towards him. As she came she

examined him with a dreadful curiosity and, now drawn out of his deep preoccupation, he examined her.

"How is it with him—since?"

"How is it with her—since?"

"Can we sit down somewhere in a quiet place?" he asked, after just touching her hand. "I have something rather urgent to say to you."

"Shall we come into the reading-room? I think it is quite empty." They went there and sat down. "What is it?" she asked anxiously.

His appearance had alarmed her and at this time she was full of strangely vital apprehension. Everything within her seemed quickened and almost dreadfully alive since she had come out of Artz's *clinique*.

He leaned back, keeping his eyes on her.

"Do you remember, when you were anxious I should pay for Miss Iselle's education, saying that she must go to Milan to be trained?"

"Yes, I believe I did."

"You did! You pressed it. It was I who, prompted by Dr. Artz, overrode your objections to Zurich and insisted upon bringing her here."

"I remember—yes—it was." Her manner was reluctant.

"I made a mistake!" he said abruptly, moving his hands.

"Marakoff is not the right man for Miss Iselle. Zurich is not the right place for her!"

"No?"

"You were right. It should have been Milan."

"I certainly thought so at the time."

"Don't you think so now?"

"But now Pauline is settled here."

"You must take her away from here. You must take her to Milan."

"But—but how can I?"

"Don't you want to?" asked Meyer sharply.

"Of course I—anything I can do for Pauline I—but perhaps you don't know that I see nothing of Pauline now."

"Why is that?"

"Monsieur Marakoff thought it best."

"Monsieur Marakoff! Monsieur Marakoff!" The ugly look of passion that occasionally completely changed Meyer's face, like a flame suddenly bursting out of a grate full of ashes apparently dead, drove into Miss Vyvyan. "A penniless singing master! D'you think I shall allow him to decide what's to be done about a girl I have brought to him, a girl I have paid for? Marakoff is not going to get the better of me. I have just told both him and Miss Iselle that unless Miss Iselle agrees at once to go to Milan there will be no more money forthcoming from me for her education."

"Then she will have to go?" said Miss Vyvyan, with a sudden impetuosity, which showed Meyer he had an ally in her.

"She said she wouldn't go. But she will have to go," said Meyer with inflexible bitterness. "And you must make her see that and take her away. Of course I will pay all the expenses. Marakoff shall be shown who is the master in all this. And as to Dr. Artz—"

At last that name, which had been in both their minds ever since they had been together, was mentioned. Miss Vyvyan was conscious of an odd, fierce sense of relief. But Meyer had stopped speaking and his silence lasted till she said, "What has Dr. Artz to do with all this?"

"Everything! And you know it." She said nothing. "Dr. Artz is at the bottom of the whole thing. But I mean to take charge now and you must help me."

"I don't see really what I can do."

"You can do this first. You can go now, while I am here, to the bureau and telegraph to Miss Iselle's father. Miss Iselle came here in your charge. She must leave here in your charge."

"But—"

"Now please don't let us lose time in arguing about a thing that has to be done. Let us go to the bureau."

He got up.

"But what am I to telegraph?"

"It is very simple. Telegraph as follows—to her father of course: 'Teaching here quite unsuitable for Pauline. Kindly authorize by telegram her transfer under my care to Milan. Mr. Meyer insists on this and will otherwise withdraw all money for expenses. I agree with him. Meyer will pay all expenses at Milan. Urgent.' That will do. Now come along!"

He bent, took her by the wrist with an urgent hand and—so it seemed to her—forced her to leave the reading-room for the bureau.

"This lady wishes to send a telegram," he said to the hall porter. "Give her a form."

Miss Vyvyan bent down over the form and began to write, but she hesitated and looked up. "I don't think I can go with Pauline to Milan—if she goes."

"Why can't you go? I will pay handsomely for everything."

"I am not on good terms with Pauline now."

"Good terms with a child like that!"

"In any case I couldn't possibly stay on in Milan."

"You need only stay for a week at most. Then you can come back here at once. I will pay for everything. Their eyes met. Miss Vyvyan slowly reddened, and for the first time since he had arrived at the hotel a smile flickered on Meyer's long lips. "I know you have become very fond of Zurich," he said, in an intimate voice.

Miss Vyvyan's eyes fell before the horrible intimacy of his. "Very well. But I don't know whether Pauline will consent to go."

"She must go if her people wish it."

Miss Vyvyan bent again and finished writing the telegram.

"And now I must leave you," said Meyer, looking suddenly exhausted. "Will you telephone to me directly you get the answer?"

"Yes. . . . Are you ill?"

"No! Why?"

"You look very tired."

A horrible expression of despair showed in Meyer's eyes. But he only said, "I am not tired at all. Good-by."

As he turned to go out of the hotel Khalil Ibrahim came into the hall and met him face to face. Meyer stopped. He stared at the young Egyptian for an instant, as if he recognized him with surprise, recognized but could not place him.

Khalil took off his hat and bowed to Miss Vyvyan, then more formally to Meyer. "How are you?" he said.

"We met of course in London," said Meyer.

"Yes. At Mrs. Simon's."

"And at the Braybridges'. I remember. You are studying here, aren't you?"

"Yes, at the university. How are you, Miss Vyvyan? I heard you weren't well."

"I am very well, thank you."

"You look splendid now. Dr. Artz has put you right no doubt. The marvelous Dr. Artz!" There was a sound of malice in his agreeable soft voice.

"Artz is not marvelous," said Meyer.

"No?"

"No, merely an impudent audacious money-maker. Keep clear of him."

"But I am quite well and have no reason to consult him," said Khalil, again smiling.

Something, either in the words, in the voice that spoke them, or in the smile that accompanied them, seemed to sting Meyer to the soul. He looked at Khalil with absolute ferocity. Khalil moved backwards a step. Meyer turned away and walked feebly out of the hotel.

"That's an alarming old gentleman," Khalil said to Miss Vyvyan.

"He isn't very well, I think."

"Well! He looks as if he were dropping into his grave. I've come here to see if I can get a room. I suppose you know I have left the *pension*."

"Yes. Madame Müller told me."

Khalil looked at her with inquiry in his splendid dark eyes. "There was a ridiculous row, brought about by a patient of Dr. Artz." He said the last words with sly significance. "Mr.

Meyer said just now that Artz is only a money-maker. If he were he wouldn't be dangerous."

"You think Dr. Artz dangerous?" said Miss Vyvyan, with a sort of painful slowness, as if reluctant to put the question and yet forced to put it.

"Very dangerous—to us young ones," said Khalil. "I am at the Baur-au-Lac. But I find it impossible to stay on there on account of Dr. Artz." He broke into French. *"Il me faut absolument déménager. Alors je cherche une chambre ici."*

"Oh! Well, I must go up to my room. Good-by." And she went away towards the lift.

In the lift, in the very short instant between one floor and another, Miss Vyvyan endured an acute crisis of feeling, one of those crises which are never forgotten, never can be forgotten by the victim. And it was not only a crisis of feeling. It was more than that. It was also a crisis of conscience.

"Dangerous—to us young ones."

What awful words those were to her who so deeply understood, so deeply felt in herself, as if in her very flesh, their meaning! Why had she met Khalil Ibrahim just then in the hall? It was as if he had been sent there to meet her, as if he had been sent to make her see, realize absolutely, the depth of her indignity if she continued to give way to the ugly forces so mysteriously at work within her.

"Your floor, madame!"

"Oh—yes!" She got out of the lift and went to her room. Her monkey face, more youthful now than it had been, but still her monkey face, was distorted with emotion.

XXXI

MEYER telephoned three times to Miss Vyvyan on the following day, asking whether an answer to the telegram had been received from Mr. Iselle. But there was none. Only on the afternoon of the next day did it come. Miss Vyvyan opened

it eagerly, nervously. She felt as if great issues hung on it. But how could that be?

> Leave Kid entirely in your loving hands hear Milan delightful City with fine Cathedral if Kid goes there with you at Meyer's expense shall feel serene God bless you love to Kid salutations to you and Meyer Wellesley Iselle.

When Miss Vyvyan had read this telegram she did not go to the telephone and tell Meyer it had come. She took it up to her bedroom, laid it on her writing table, sat down in the one armchair by the window and gave herself up to thought.

It was winter now. There were mists over the lake. The opera season was beginning. The nights were long. Summer was a companion to lonely people. That companion was gone. She felt dreadfully alone. Zurich had become horrible to her, like a dark city in a nightmare. And yet she couldn't bear the idea of leaving it. Over this dark city she felt the influence of Dr. Artz, like a thing brooding with outstretched batlike wings, enormous, relentless, brooding over thousands with intent and power to do harm, as he had done harm to her.

Why had she ever met him? She had been so happy, so contented and eagerly busy, so charitable and friendly in that long ago when all her friends, her many friends, had thought of her and called her "dear old Naomi." No one who really knew her, knew her as she knew herself, would call her that now. She was a hybrid now, full of ugly desires, full even of —wasn't she?—ugly intentions.

Dr. Artz had turned her eager attention from others and had fastened it on herself. He had made her the subject of an experiment. Deliberately he had drawn her into his net.

Nevertheless, couldn't she get back to a decent conduct of life, such as had formerly been perfectly natural to her? Being honorable, straight and kindly, full of warm humanity, used to be as natural to her as breathing. Had the promptings of a man full of malicious humor, of cynical indifference to mental

suffering, had a series of *piqûres* and an operation so radically changed her that she was incapable of a strong effort to get back to the former Naomi?

She sat in the armchair and debated that question with Wellesley Iselle's telegram in her hand.

She was trying to make up her mind to this—to the journey with Pauline to Milan insisted upon by Meyer, and to remaining in Milan, to not coming back to Zurich—ever. Another greater effort she felt that she couldn't make. She couldn't go away from Zurich alone, leaving Pauline behind her. But if they both went to Milan, couldn't she start again? Couldn't she become once more the young girl's devoted friend, intent only on helping her towards the achievement of ambition, towards the money and the glory that come to a successful prima donna?

She looked down at the telegram. But if Pauline wouldn't go? And then Meyer's intentions?

But she could be forced to go. There was no one to pay for her if Meyer cut off her allowance. And he would cut it off. She had now a terribly intimate understanding of Meyer.

And he had a terribly intimate understanding of her. They had both been patients of Dr. Artz. Again she felt Dr. Artz as huge and brooding with batlike outstretched wings over Zurich.

She shuddered. She was becoming horribly morbid all alone in this beginning of winter, persecuted by desires that had been deliberately induced in her by the experiments of Dr. Artz. That evening she knew, as never before, how the state of the body can influence the mind and even, apparently, what men think of as soul.

Well, she must communicate with Meyer. She got up from the chair. As she did so there was a tap at the door.

"Entrez!"

A page boy appeared. *"Il y a quelqu'un au téléphone pour madame."*

She went downstairs to the telephone. It was Meyer inquiring in a rasping voice whether there was no reply from Mr. Iselle. Miss Vyvyan told him that a telegram had just come and repeated it into the telephone.

"That's excellent! Will you go at once to Miss Iselle and then let me know the result?"

After an instant of hesitation Miss Vyvyan said she would go. "Pauline may refuse," she said. "But at any rate I'll go to her and hear what she says."

"Would it be too much trouble if you came on here to my hotel to tell me the result?"

"No; I will come."

"Thank you. I shall expect you then."

Something in the sound of his voice made Miss Vyvyan suddenly realize that if she persuaded Pauline to go with her to Milan at Meyer's expense she would be doing devil's work. As she put up the receiver she was shaken. She didn't know what to do. But she put on a hat and a cheap fur that she had possessed for many years and started for Dufourstrasse. She must, at any rate, see Pauline.

When she got to the *pension* Pauline was in. Hedwig told her so, and as she walked towards Pauline's room she heard her practicing Dvorak's "Songs My Mother Taught Me." She stood still for a moment in the passage and listened. It was certainly a lovely quality of voice. And hadn't it increased in power? Surely it had. For a moment she was able once more to think of Pauline as the lark, the lark discovered and believed in by her.

She knocked when the song was finished. *"Herein!"* called the singing voice of Pauline. Miss Vyvyan opened the door.

Pauline was sitting before the small upright piano which was her most cherished possession in Zurich. When she saw Miss Vyvyan an expression of astonishment came on her face and she got up quickly, like one startled. "Oh—Miss Vyvyan!"

Miss Vyvyan shut the door, went up to her and gave her a kiss on the forehead. "How good your voice sounds! I was listening; you were in the beginning of the song when I came. Of course I couldn't interrupt, so I stood outside and listened. Your voice sounded beautiful." She spoke with a sincerity which was convincing.

"I'm glad you think that," Pauline said, with the quick flush

which usually came when she was very much pleased by anything. "Do sit down, won't you?"

Miss Vyvyan sat down. And there was a silence. Miss Vyvyan found it difficult to break it. Now that she was with Pauline, saw how childlike she still looked in spite of her just twenty-one years, saw the simplicity of her gray eyes, the fluid youthfulness of her figure, thought of the sound of her lark-like voice, she didn't quite know how to put forward Meyer's proposition, knowing, with the horrible exactitude with which she was endowed by Artz, what Meyer was.

But she must say something. And at last she said: "We haven't seen much of each other lately."

"No. But you've been away, haven't you?"

"Yes."

They both looked very conscious. Each one knew that the other at that moment was thinking of Dr. Artz.

"I hope you are feeling all right now," said Pauline, uncomfortably.

"Oh, I'm very well indeed. But—but now, Pauline, I have something to say to you. That's why I've come."

"Oh? Yes?" The girl looked apprehensive. Miss Vyvyan noticed that.

"I've had a telegram from your father."

"Daddy! Why should he telegraph to you?"

"I must explain. I telegraphed to him first. Do sit down, dear." Pauline sat down by the piano, on the piano stool. "There's been a difficulty about your money matters, hasn't there?"

"But how did you know?" Pauline asked, looking suddenly less soft and less childlike.

Even there was a light of suspicion in her eyes.

"I have seen Mr. Meyer."

"Oh!" The word sounded cold and defiant.

"Remember, Pauline, that Mr. Meyer has done a great deal for you."

"Yes, I know. That is the hateful thing!" said Pauline, with a vehemence Miss Vyvyan never before had heard in her voice.

"But—"

"It is dreadful having to be grateful to someone who—" She stopped. "What is it? What do you mean?"

"I can't accept any more help from Mr. Meyer. I have told him so. Didn't he tell you?"

"No—not that!"

"What did he tell you?"

"He told me that he had asked you to leave here and to go to Milan to be trained, that you had refused to go, and that he said if you didn't go he wouldn't continue your allowance and the money for your lessons with Monsieur Marakoff. That was all. Do you mean that you told him that even if you left here you wouldn't take any more money from him?"

"No; but I wouldn't. And he knows it."

"But why wouldn't you?" Pauline was silent. "What did you say to him exactly?" Miss Vyvyan asked after a pause.

"I told Mr. Meyer that I should not accept any more help from him."

"But surely—"

"I won't, Miss Vyvyan. Whatever happens, I won't."

"But what will you do?"

"I shall manage without."

"But how?"

"Mr. Marakoff is going to train me for nothing. I shall pay him back as soon as I make some money by singing."

"But you have to live."

"I shall manage." The repetition of those words was obstinate and assured.

"I don't see how," said Miss Vyvyan.

Without making any comment on this Pauline said: "But you said daddy had sent you a telegram and that you had telegraphed to him. What did he say?"

"I have the telegram here."

Miss Vyvyan handed the telegram to Pauline, who read it, bending her fair head over it and showing her girlish neck. When she had finished it she looked up, and her eyes troubled Miss Vyvyan.

"What is the matter—dear?"

"I can't help what daddy says. I'm not going to Milan."

She gave back the telegram.

"Mr. Meyer dictated it," said Miss Vyvyan. "I didn't—he dictated it. I mean the telegram I sent to your father. It wasn't my idea at all."

"No? Well, I can't go. So it doesn't matter."

Miss Vyvyan felt absolute finality confronting her. Pauline had become—suddenly it seemed to her—an entirely independent human being endowed with that mysterious thing a despotic will. There was nothing more to be done here. Useless to fight against the decision. Besides Miss Vyvyan's true part, the part given to her at birth, didn't want to fight.

"But what will you do about money?" she asked vaguely, feebly almost.

"I shall manage."

Miss Vyvyan got up to go. What was there to stay for? She was not to be in it evidently. The door was shut against her. And she deserved that. The bitterness of that knowledge!

"I don't know how," she said, nervously. "But I will write to your father and—"

"Oh, I'll write to daddy."

"Yes? That will be best perhaps. Well, dear, good-by."

"Good-by."

At the door Miss Vyvyan said: "Remember, Pauline, that if you are in trouble about money—and I don't see at all how you can get along now—I will do my very best to help you as far as I can. You know I'm not at all rich. But still I will manage somehow to—" She stopped.

For a moment the obstinate look in Pauline's face wavered. That was how it seemed to Miss Vyvyan. A hint of the old Pauline showed. "You are good!" she said impulsively. But she added immediately, in quite a different voice: "Really I shall be able to manage. But I thank you very much all the same."

And then Miss Vyvyan went away. She wanted to say more. She wanted to run wild in humane promises and assertions,

to say she would give concerts and hand over the proceeds to Pauline, to undertake to find in London or elsewhere another music lover male or female whom she would persuade to take Meyer's place. But something in the girl's unusually steady eyes prevented her. How steady they were now, almost like the eyes of Carl Fügler!

Carl Fügler! She shivered a little as she went out into the cold air which seemed to hold a breath from the snowfields. She was doing her best. She was trying very hard to get back to her former self. But Dr. Artz had made it impossible for her. And he had changed her. He wasn't a charlatan. She felt, genuinely felt, a surge as of youth in her, or of something like youth, warm, ardent, desirous.

How terrible it all was! The fight within her was tremendous, and the physical took part in it with what was mental and affectional.

But now she must go to Meyer and tell him about Pauline. And she hurried along by the steel-gray lake towards the bridge over the Limmat. When she reached the Baur-au-Lac it was already evening and the lights shone along the lake shore like golden eyes peering through the mists of December. And suddenly Zurich seemed strange, very foreign to Miss Vyvyan and full of solitude.

She went into the hotel and was standing by the bureau intending to ask for Meyer when she felt a hand grip her coat sleeve. "What are you doing here?" That excited, questioning voice! She knew it too well. She turned round and there of course was Princess Teresco. "Have you come to see me? Come to tell me how *you* have fared at the hands of Dr. Artz?"

There was an extraordinary bitterness of satire in the uneasy voice, and the light eyes that searched Miss Vyvyan's face under the white felt hat drawn down almost to the straw-colored eyebrows were cruel in their piercing observation.

"I have come here to see a friend who is staying here."

"I know! You have come to see Mr. Leon. One moment! I must speak to you." And still gripping Miss Vyvyan's sleeve and the arm in it the princess forced Miss Vyvyan to go with her

into the inner hall, and drew her down, with a strong, excitedly nervous pressure, into a chair. "I won't keep you long, but—" She sat down close to Miss Vyvyan and stared at her intently. "Ah! He hasn't failed with you as he has with Leon Meyer! I can see that. And so you are in for it, too!"

The intense discomfort linked with absolute indignation, which the princess had provoked in Miss Vyvyan in the *pension* came to her again now. Her delicacy, her reserve, writhed under those eyes, under the words and the voice which spoke them.

"I don't know what you mean."

"Yes, you do! What's the good of pretending? We're both his patients, or have been. And Dr. Artz's patients know about each other. I know about you, and you know about me. No, don't go yet! Stay just a moment! There are one or two things I must say to you."

"Really I don't know what—"

"How can you know unless you listen? You came here with that girl, Miss Iselle. Send her away from here, or take her away—and then come back without her."

"Why should—"

"She's a dangerous bad girl. She's the most horrid type there is, the *demivierge* type."

"Princess, I can't allow—"

"She's my enemy, and she's your enemy, too. You must get her away from here. Until you do, you can take it from me, you will have no chance, no chance at all. Your treatment by Dr. Artz will be of no use to you. In fact it will only torment you. That girl will ruin everything for you as she has tried to do for me."

"Really I can't possibly—"

"What is the good of hypocrisy? We both know why we went to the *clinique*. You went because of Carl Fügler and as long as that girl is here—"

Miss Vyvyan got up with fierce resolution. She was burning with indignation and shame. She felt as if she had just been stripped naked in public. "I shall not stay here any longer." Her voice trembled. "I have to pay a visit. Good-by."

The princess sprang up. "How crude you are, like all unmarried Englishwomen! But then why go to Dr. Artz? What is the good of going and then of pretending—"

Miss Vyvyan began to walk away. The princess hurried after her. "Take that horrid girl away or send her away from here! Get rid of her! She is abominable. She has no passions herself, but in men—"

"Please allow me—"

"Carl Fügler, Khalil Ibrahim—"

"Please, princess, I have to go to the lift!"

"And now even Marakoff is going to Artz on account of her! It is insufferable! She must be got rid of!"

Miss Vyvyan stopped by the lift shaft. But the lift was not there. It had gone up to the top floor of the hotel. The princess stopped with her. "Get rid of her! Force her to go!"

"Certainly not!"

"You are trying to play the saint? Well, hear what Meyer has to say! Have you seen him since he has come back? Artz has made an utter failure with him, an utter failure. Meyer has his knife into Artz. And there again that girl—"

Miss Vyvyan pressed the lift bell. If only the lift would descend! She felt absolutely desperate.

"It will come in a moment. Why are you in such a hurry? Dr. Artz is after that horrid girl, too. He pretends not to notice her, but that is all bluff. Really he—"

The lift was there at last! The lift man opened the cage. Someone got out. Miss Vyvyan did not know whether a man or a woman. She stepped into the lift. Her face was burning. There was a drumming in her ears. "Take me up to Monsieur Meyer's apartment, please."

"Bien, madame!"

As the lift moved she heard the princess say, "As long as she stays here—"

"She's mad!" Miss Vyvyan said to herself. "Dr. Artz has driven her mad with his treatment." And then a voice within her muttered, "And you? What about you?"

Suddenly she felt afraid. Had the princess just shown her

what she might become if she let herself go? Was that what Dr. Artz had decreed she should be?

"This is the floor, madame."

XXXII

MISS VYVYAN stood outside a door above which was the number told to her by the lift man and tapped. There was no reply from within. She waited a moment. An intense longing came to her to go away, not to see Meyer, never to see Meyer again, never to see that horrible Princess Teresco again, never to see Dr. Artz again. The interview downstairs in the inner hall had tortured her but it had thoroughly opened her eyes. There was no more blindness in her, if indeed there had been blindness. And now she felt that there had been.

She made a movement to go. As she did so the door softly opened and Meyer stood there. "Why didn't you knock?" he said, with, she thought, a sort of dry suspicion, looking at her with those painfully seeking eyes of his, the eyes of a man almost fearfully intelligent and always hungry for something.

"I did knock."

"I didn't hear you."

"But you opened the door!"

"That was because I had a feeling that perhaps someone was there. I heard nothing. How are you? Do come in."

He held out his hand conventionally. She took it conventionally. Then she walked into his sitting-room.

It was large and very warm. The curtains were drawn and there was a fire burning. To Miss Vyvyan the heat seemed overpowering in that first moment, and her hands went quickly to her old fur.

"Yes, do take it off," said Meyer. "I have to keep warm." Directly he had said that it seemed that he regretted it, for he added, "Like everyone else in this terrible winter weather." She

took off the fur and he laid it down. "Where will you sit? Here?"

"Yes. No, thank you. I don't want anything."

"But—"

"No, thank you."

He sat down by her, slowly, letting himself down as if with precaution. His movement was old. "Well," he said, "have you been to Miss Iselle?"

"Yes. I have just come from her."

"And you put the Milan proposition to her of course?"

"Yes."

"You showed her Mr. Iselle's telegram?"

"Yes."

"What did she say?"

"Mr. Meyer," said Miss Vyvyan, meeting those hungry eyes, forcing herself to meet them steadily, "Pauline won't go to Milan. She won't leave Monsieur Marakoff."

"She must."

"She won't. And she won't accept any more of your—your"—she was trying to say "generous," but she found that she couldn't—"of your help, any more help from you. Pauline has a will. I suspected it a good while ago. She often seems submissive, even perhaps slavish—with men, but she has a will. And now she has—she has—found it. She will stay here, in Zurich."

Meyer got up, slowly, carefully, went to a table on which lay a large cigar box, opened it, took out a light-colored cigar, carefully cut the end of it off with a little pocket-knife, lit it, and came back. "You don't mind?"

"Of course not."

He sat down again. "So Miss Iselle has found some other man to pay her expenses!" Miss Vyvyan was startled. "Do you know who it is?"

"I'm sure Pauline wouldn't—"

"So she didn't tell you who it is?"

"I've no reason to think that Pauline would allow—"

He interrupted her drily. "Didn't you enter into the money question?"

"I did speak about money certainly."

"What did Miss Iselle say?"

"She said she could manage."

"Manage!"

"Yes. I spoke several times about the money question. Naturally I had to."

"Of course."

"And each time she said she would manage."

"And do you mean to say that that didn't convey to you the fact that before you went to see her she had arranged about her future in Zurich?"

Miss Vyvyan began to feel as if, perhaps, she were very ingenuous, even very foolish. But Pauline! "I don't believe—I don't see how she can have—" She broke off. She remembered the assured tone she had noticed in Pauline's voice when the question of money had been mentioned. "Oh, she told me Monsieur Marakoff was going to teach her for nothing!"

Meyer looked for an instant as an animal looks when it is snarling. "And her living expenses? The *pension?* Her dresses? Her current expenses?" he asked. Miss Vyvyan was silent. "Will her father pay for them?"

"Mr. Iselle! Oh no! How can he? His wife has a little. But they are always in debt, I believe."

"Then—who is the man?"

"I don't know. I offered—"

"You!" he said sharply, in an accusing voice.

"Well, I felt—after all it was through me Pauline ever came here. And naturally I—"

"How can *you* afford all this extra expense?"

"No, I know I can't. But somehow I might manage to—"

"You can't! And we know it. And Miss Iselle of course knows it, too. She didn't ask you to help her, did she?"

"Oh no! On the contrary she—I really don't know how she will manage."

"She has found some man to pay for her of course."

"I can hardly believe that. But perhaps Monsieur Marakoff has offered—"

"Marakoff! He is miserably poor. He can scarcely manage himself. No, it isn't Marakoff."

"But then who is there here who would help her?"

Meyer's eyes looked at her surely with contempt at her impotence. "Who? It is one of two men here in Zurich. It's either Carl Fügler, that baritone, or it is Dr. Artz."

At the mention of Carl Fügler's name Miss Vyvyan involuntarily shrank in her seat, but at the name of Dr. Artz she lifted her wiry little body up and pushed her head quickly forward. "Dr. Artz help Pauline!"

"Why not?"

"Dr. Artz! But Pauline scarcely knows him."

"It was he who suggested her coming here."

"But he has taken no interest in her since she has been here."

"Are you certain of that?" The cynicism in his old vital eyes repelled her, but it also enlightened her. She knew as she looked at him, wishing not to look but compelled, that she was certain of scarcely anything when Dr. Artz's personality and character were in question. "Haven't you found out yet that Artz is a profound humbug, profound because he gives the impression of being almost brutally frank? Don't you know yet that he is quite free from the chain that most men bear about with them, whether they know it or not?"

"What chain is that?"

"A tendency to kindness. Artz isn't kind."

"No—indeed!" She said it with a terribly mournful conviction.

"Ah," he said, "you have reason to know that, as I have. Hopeless to expect anything soft from that quarter! Another thing! Have you ever been in Artz's drawing-room?"

"No, never. Only in his consulting room and the room where the *piqûres* are given."

"I have been in his drawing-room. The type of woman he is attracted by is very fair, with light and childlike eyes, gray or blue." He paused. Then he added: "Now do you think it impossible that Artz should agree to pay for Miss Iselle's expenses in Zurich?"

"But how should he know that she was going to need money?"

"Artz manages to know everything that he wishes to know or that it is important for him to know."

"But by what means could he have—"

"He might have learned it through his patient, Marakoff. Or he might have guessed it—through me. Anyhow it was quite easy for him to know, or guess it." Miss Vyvyan looked at him in silence. She didn't dare to ask for any explanation of his last remark. "Then," he said, "there is Carl Fügler."

"It couldn't be he! It couldn't be he!"

"Why not? He is madly in love with Miss Iselle."

"Who—who can know that?"

He only smiled—a terrible smile, and said three words in Italian. They were *"la luna immobile."*

Miss Vyvyan's head drooped slightly. She murmured, "Pauline wouldn't allow him to."

"I incline to believe it is Dr. Artz," said Meyer.

"But I can't believe she would let him pay either."

"You are gifted, you are clever, but, forgive me for saying it, you lack the knowledge of humanity that is encouraged, perhaps even created, by cynicism. You believe too much in the simplicity of human beings. Miss Iselle, that Pauline of yours, may be something, much even, of a child, but she has a governing principle in her nevertheless. Don't you know what it is?"

"What is it?"

"Singer's ambition. She is not daughter, not friend, not lover—yet; she is singer. She has singer's ambition, singer's hardness, singer's ingratitude, singer's determination to develop at all costs—no, not all! Not all!" He moved his hands with a fluttering motion. "Or," he said, in a lower voice, "she would have gone to Milan. Perhaps I am wrong?" He seemed to be asking somebody that, somebody at a distance.

"There are things evidently," he added slowly, "that conquer the singer in her. But nevertheless the main thing in her at present is the singer. And the singer may have accepted Dr. Artz's help . . . has accepted it, I believe. Artz has been

very clever with Miss Iselle. Probably she does not suspect him."

"Suspect him of what?"

"Of meaning to add her eventually to his collection."

"His collection?"

"Of wives."

"Pauline! What a horrible idea!"

"The other wives were young women, almost girls."

"I don't believe it—no, really I don't. All the time we have been here Dr. Artz has shown no interest whatever in Pauline."

"That only proves his cunning."

"But—no, there are things which go absolutely against your suggestion."

"Indeed! May I ask what they are?" There was irony in his voice.

"Oh well—but I assure you they put such a scheme quite out of court."

"Won't you tell me what they are? Then perhaps I can judge better. At present I am quite in the dark."

Miss Vyvyan's embarrassment was obvious. He seemed to enjoy it. He looked at it with a faint smile on his dry and almost white lips. His face of a mummy was apparently amused. "Do not be afraid of hurting my feelings, if that is what is troubling you," he added. "Out with it!" The last words came with sudden, almost fierce force and authority.

"It's only that a man in love is surely a man who can be jealous. And Dr. Artz hasn't shown any jealousy of Pauline."

"With Carl Fügler—do you mean?"

"I suppose—yes."

"Anyone else?" Miss Vyvyan's embarrassment became still more apparent. He stared at it intently. "I know what you are thinking. And I confess I was at first slightly puzzled by that, too."

"What? I don't know—really, I don't understand."

"Artz's desire—intention—whatever you like to call it—to get me here for treatment. That is what you are thinking of." With cold brutality he continued: "Oh, what is the good of

our playing the usual hypocrite's game, we two just out of the *clinique?* Artz has three manias. Most of us have at least one. In his case there is a trinity." He laughed faintly, tonelessly. "Power, money, women, young, fair, very fair child-women! There you have Artz. He is really scientific. Through his undoubted knowledge he gets people into his power. He makes money out of them of course when they have any. But some he takes merely for the fun of the thing." His eyes as he said that were terrible to Miss Vyvyan. They showed his meaning so nakedly. "Artz has an immense and peculiar sense of humor which must be ministered to. He makes some very subtle experiments, and the laughter of the gods, mingling with his unheard laughter, rewards him. But the rich, like myself, must pay. And then, too, there is the question of advertisement. I am pretty well known in the *money* world."

"Yes, indeed!"

"That must have tempted Artz. Don't you think so?" His old intense eyes were holding hers. She couldn't look away from him. "His mania for power and money took the risk of me. That is why he wanted me here. He meant to do great things for me. I am positive of that. He was genuine there."

"Yes?" She was consciously trying to keep an expression out of her eyes, an expression of amazement. For what had Artz done for Meyer? To Miss Vyvyan, Meyer looked now years older than when he had first come to Zurich. Then he had been a man, elderly of course, even old, but carefully arranged, and having some semblance of middle age, at any rate a clever and fairly successful pretension to be younger than he probably was. But now he seemed to have crumbled. One looked in him upon the dust and ashes of life, upon dregs, upon that which one instinctively felt should be swept away as soon as possible. If the hand of Dr. Artz was shown in Meyer then who could believe in his scientific skill, in his *bona fides?* And yet why should he deliberately make a failure of Meyer? Unless—

"I know exactly what you are thinking." There was a thin hardness in the voice which matched the eyes of the speaker,

and the two hardnesses joined gave to Miss Vyvyan the impression that complete hopelessness had carried Meyer away into a region where brutal sincerity didn't matter—just because there was nothing to hope for. "You are thinking that I'm a very poor advertisement for Artz's treatment, that he's evidently made a failure with me. Aren't you?" Miss Vyvyan didn't answer that question. "You're thinking, too, that perhaps you were wrong about Artz not being jealous. He might have made a failure of me just because of jealousy, mightn't he?" Again he paused but there was no answer. "That's quite true, but Artz meant to make a success with me. As I said he was ready to risk me because of the advertisement I should have been to him. Didn't he risk Carl Fügler? Isn't he risking Carl Fügler still?"

Miss Vyvyan looked down. Meyer knew very well she was suffering acutely, but he didn't mind that. It is sometimes pleasant to share.

"The fact is that Artz has such a profound belief in himself that he thinks he can afford to take risks. You see he has married three beautiful women, all of them young. That gives a man confidence."

"But then why—" She stopped.

"Why has he made his failure with me? Marakoff comes in there."

"Monsieur Marakoff?"

"Yes." He paused. His face hardened till in its white smoothness it looked almost like a bit of carved marble. "Marakoff was more afraid of me than Artz was, and so Marakoff played, is playing still, Artz's game. There's the fool a great singer can be! These artists! They are children! They are babies barely out of the cradle away from their art! But Artz—he's the clever one." Miss Vyvyan detected an undertone of respect in the voice which said those last words. "The question is whether it was really clever of him to make an enemy of me. What do you think?" He was smiling faintly as he looked at her now. As she made no reply he added: "Now you know what

I think to be the truth of this affair. You brought Miss Iselle here. Her parents trust you. In a certain sense you are still responsible for her. At any rate the world would certainly think so if it knew the facts. Are you going to let Artz have his way? Are you going to let him take another bite out of youth?"

"But what more can I do?"

"Perhaps you would rather not do anything more?" His malice was seeking for malice in her. His evil was looking about in her to see how much of evil exactly she contained. She felt that, felt it intimately and revolted. And yet?

It was then as if Dr. Artz in her were fighting against herself, as if he and what he had done to her were battling against what she essentially was.

"Would you rather do nothing?" There was a dreadful sound of knowing intimacy in the old voice. "We two from the *clinique,*" it seemed to be saying, silently, "we understand one another, don't we—don't we?"

And Carl Fügler with his glorious youth?

"What more can I do? Pauline refuses to leave Zurich."

"If she stays Artz will have her. You can be sure of that."

Miss Vyvyan got up. She felt that she couldn't bear any more just then. This interview, following immediately upon the dreadful conversation with Princess Teresco, had driven her to the limit of her powers of endurance. She felt that she must be alone, where no intimate eyes—no *clinique* eyes—could observe her, could feel about in her with this dreadful stripping intimacy. "Good-by," she said.

Meyer took hold of her hand and pressed it. "You are responsible."

She did not make any protest. What would be the use? For wasn't she in truth responsible? It had all come about because of her. Her eager zest for Pauline's future had brought it about. In some dreadful way it was as if she had mysteriously willed it all. She drew her hand away from his with a shudder.

XXXIII

"I MUST do something!" These words kept repeating themselves in Miss Vyvyan's mind as she walked quickly away in the dark from the Baur-au-Lac. "I must do something! I must do something!"

Inaction was impossible now. She was, always had been an energetic creature full of mental and physical activity. But now spurs were applied to her. She felt the prick of them cruelly. Something must be done for Pauline, and something must be done for herself.

It is seldom that one human being speaks to another with naked sincerity. It seemed to Miss Vyvyan that Meyer had just done that to her. "Some of them he takes merely for the fun of the thing."

That explanation of Artz had seared her to the bone, she felt. That she should be forced to suffer like this in order that Dr. Artz's "immense and peculiar sense of humor" should be ministered to! Intolerable! She burned with a fierce indignation. But the words of Meyer had roused in her pride as well as indignation. She must refuse Dr. Artz any further amusement provided by her. Probably he thought he was going to have quite a long entertainment with her as victim, that his unheard laughter would mingle with the laughter of the gods, because of her, for many more days in Zurich.

That should not be. Meyer had provided her that afternoon with a weapon of self-defense. He had enabled her, she believed, to be drastic with herself. There are moments when a great sacrifice is made not only possible but imperative. Miss Vyvyan felt that there was only one thing for her to do now that Meyer had been so horribly explicit. She would do it. She would be able to do it. Khalil Ibrahim and the princess had led up to this climax with Meyer. And now Dr. Artz must be robbed of his anticipated laughter. His peculiar and immense sense of humor must go without—for once.

But then there was the question of Pauline. And again the words, "I must do something!" sounded through the mind of Miss Vyvyan. And again Dr. Artz was there before the eyes of her imagination as an enemy who must be attacked, and quickly.

But if Meyer were wrong in his surmise? Usually Miss Vyvyan was a woman of very strong opinions and convictions, and a woman who had self-confidence in her holding of both. But she came away from her interview with Meyer under the spell of his cynical worldly knowledge. That miserable, decrepit old man knew a great deal about human nature, saw more penetratingly into it than she did. She saw him now as cynic, herself as innocent.

And which saw more deeply into the complexities of human nature—the cynic or the innocent? Her misery supplied the answer to that question. She had indeed been simple. Meyer was, she recognized, so much cleverer than herself in the reading of human nature that he was probably right about Pauline.

And yet it still seemed to Miss Vyvyan almost incredible that Dr. Artz should have offered monetary help to Pauline and that the girl should have accepted it.

"Are you going to let Artz take another bite out of youth?" Meyer knew how to find words which cut deep, knifelike words. "You are responsible."

But there was the will of Pauline! She had a will. She had proved it, was proving it now. And yet Meyer, who had known Artz better than she had, and perhaps knew Pauline better than she did, had said with the cold certainty of a man who felt that he couldn't be mistaken, "If she stays Artz will have her."

Miss Vyvyan remembered those three wives, all young, all good-looking. They had satisfied Artz and had then been got rid of. He had been successful with them. Why must he be unsuccessful necessarily with Pauline?

"Artz is a clever one."

"How utterly loathsome cleverness can be!" Miss Vyvyan said to herself. And then she saw the lights of the Eden Hotel. She was astonished. There already! She hadn't realized how

fast she had walked, driven by mental excitement which had reacted on her wiry little body.

She went in, went upstairs to her room and sat until dinner time considering what to do. She must do something. She couldn't possibly remain inactive. She knew that. The pain of inaction would be much too great for her to bear it. But what should she do? She couldn't decide that question. She hadn't decided it when the time came for changing her dress hurriedly and going downstairs to the dining-room.

When she got there she saw Khalil Ibrahim, very smart in a perfectly cut "smoking," evidently made by a London tailor, dining alone at a table very near hers. As she came down the room he got up and bowed.

"Evidently he's found a room here," she thought. She sat down. From her place she could see Khalil, and though she was so engrossed with her own problem she noticed a change in him. He looked far more passionate and expressive than he had looked when in London and, to her thinking, far more definitely foreign. Formerly he had been suave, smiling, a charming and even seductive young man, very self-possessed, master of himself, completely at home in English society. Now he looked, she thought, overpoweringly eastern and somehow quite out of place among the sedate and unromantic people, mostly Swiss and German, who were decorously dining at the Eden.

"What's happened to him?" she thought. And then at once came the answer to the question. "Pauline—the princess—Dr. Artz!"

Again Dr. Artz, the danger to youth here in Zurich! Even Khalil Ibrahim had suffered from Dr. Artz. He had been driven from the Pension Müller, and now he had been driven from the Baur-au-Lac.

Their eyes met. Miss Vyvyan looked away, but not before she had read something in those fiery, and surely angry, dark eyes. "And you? Are you going to take a bite out of youth, prompted by Dr. Artz?"

She felt an absurd and tragic impulse to go to Khalil Ibrahim, and say to him: "No! I'm not one of the crowd in which

Princess Teresco is numbered! I'm not a female counterpart of Dr. Artz! Don't put me with them." And then she thought of Carl Fügler.

Khalil Ibrahim finished his dinner and got up while she was still eating. He looked across at her. She could see that he was hesitating. Would he come over to her? Did she want him to come? She didn't—and yet she did. Perhaps something in her monkey face decided him, for he came up and said, "I've got in here, you see."

"Yes."

"May I take this chair? Do you mind if I stay for a moment?"

"Of course not. Do."

He sat down opposite to her, stared across at her and frowned. All his suavity had died away. A fierce youth confronted her. But she felt that he was frowning not at her, but because of some anger with which she had probably nothing to do. "I hope you will like this hotel," she said.

"That will be all right. I am looking for private rooms. Charming of Dr. Artz to get me out of the *pension,* and then out of the Baur-au-Lac, wasn't it?"

"But surely he—"

"Of course it was Dr. Artz. It was all owing to him. I wonder the young fellows of Zurich don't go for him." He spoke with a savage disregard of conventionality. No Englishman, she felt, however indignant, however injured he considered himself to be, could have been so careless in showing his feelings, so utterly indifferent to opinion about him. "What do *you* think of Artz?" he added, fixing a pair of suddenly searching eyes upon her. "You've been to him, I hear. Do you like him? Do you think well of him?"

"I think he's a very clever doctor," she said.

"Too clever! If he were not clever he would not matter. I wish someone would punish him. May I smoke?"

"Yes, do."

He lit a cigarette. "This interference with *us* is simply damnable!" he said.

"How d'you mean—us?" she asked.

He replied with another question. "How old do you take Artz to be?"

"How old? I suppose—I don't know really. I suppose he's about forty-five."

"I have been told by people here, who ought to know, who I believe do know, that he is between fifty and sixty."

"I shouldn't have thought that possible."

"It is so. If he can make others young—as they call it, a nice sort of youth!—why should not he rejuvenate himself from time to time? And this old man, old medicine-man, pretending to be only in middle life, attacks *us,* the really young, spends his time in trying to spoil life for *us* and getting well paid for it. In fact he is making a fortune by attacking us." There was a brooding note in his voice. She felt near to a fire that was smoldering. "But for Artz I should still be in the *pension.*"

"And what would be the good of that?" said Miss Vyvyan, suddenly moved to get to grips with this strange young man.

"I am in love with Miss Iselle," he said. "If it had not been for Artz and that dreadful old princess, I should soon have made her care for me. But she is sensitive. That horrible row in the *pension* sickened her. She connects me with it. And now she is afraid of me."

"Pauline could never care for you."

"Why not? I say she could." He said it with sudden arrogance. "Am I offensive? Am I disgusting? What is there against me?"

"Pauline isn't ready for love yet."

"Ready? What do you mean? I understood she was twenty."

"She is just twenty-one."

"Twenty-one! And not ready for love!" He laughed. "Really, Miss Vyvyan, you must think me a kid to say such things to me."

"They are true. Pauline only wants to be let alone. Yes, she *is* just singer at present as Mr. Meyer said." She spoke the last words in a very low voice.

"Just singer?"

"She wants to sing—not to love."

Khalil stared. "Well, though I was brought up speaking English, I shall never understand you English—never! Have you told all this to that student, Carl Fügler?"

"Of course not! Why should I?" she said, startled, and at once on the defensive.

"You had better. If you think it necessary to tell this to me I say it is quite as necessary to tell it to Fügler. He would not agree with you though, any more than I agree. And what about Dr. Artz?"

Miss Vyvyan was taken aback by the unexpected turn Khalil had given to the conversation. "What do you mean? Why should I say such things to Mr. Fügler and to Dr. Artz?" she asked. Her question was superfluous and even hypocritical, and she knew that even as she put it. But something within her felt forced to pretend at that moment.

"Why do you ask me such things," asked Khalil, "when you know the answer as well as I do? Fügler wants Miss Iselle and Dr. Artz means to have her."

The sharpness of observation, the understanding shown by this oriental boy really astonished Miss Vyvyan. Where had he found opportunities for the gathering up of so much?

"I don't understand how you can know such things," she said feebly.

"But do you mean that you do not know them?"

"How?" she repeated.

"At the *pension* when Princess Teresco flew into such a rage with me I saw Dr. Artz look at Miss Iselle. And that look was quite enough for me. Do you not know how a man looks at a girl whom he means to possess and is sure he will possess some day?"

"I—I think perhaps I have been rather stupid, rather blind about such things. But—but Mr. Fügler?"

"Oh, everyone knows about Fügler."

"Everyone?"

"I am studying at the university here."

"Yes, I know."

"In the *pension* there is living Harry Van Deyn, an American student, also at the university."

"Mr. Van Deyn—I have seen him. Pauline knows him."

"Of course. Well, Van Deyn knows Fügler." He stopped. Evidently he thought that enough had been said and that it would be entirely superfluous to say anything more.

And so everyone knew, and took as a matter of course, what she— It seemed to Miss Vyvyan then that the final blow had been given to the edifice of crazy hope she had built up in Zurich, had been given at the dark hands of this Egyptian more, much more than twenty years younger than herself. Or had it even been that, an edifice of hope? Hadn't she always secretly known, known through the creature each one hides within the temple and often wishes to ignore the existence of, that the tottering edifice was really built up only of desire, not of hope at all? Actually she felt as if she heard with her ears—the crash.

"What is the matter, please?" Miss Vyvyan didn't answer. "So half the university at least knows," he said, as if thinking her so stupid that, incredible as it might seem to his sharp mind, an explanation was necessary. "But perhaps you do not know how young students talk about love matters?"

"I understand. I quite understand."

"Well then—"

She looked at him with a gravity so intense that it really impressed him. And he was not easily impressed by any woman over thirty. "You and the others are wasting your time over Pauline. She doesn't want you all. She doesn't really want anyone at present. All she wants is to be allowed to sing and to get on in her singing. She may seem rather like a child. In many ways she is very childish. But she has something in her—it's —it's something so strong that it rules her, I think, and I don't believe that one of you could possibly kill it."

"What is that?"

"I think of it as a necessity of song, like the lark has."

He looked puzzled, and quite different because he was puzzled. "The lark?" he said.

"Until she can sing as she wants to sing I don't believe Pauline will love, really love, anyone."

"Then she must be what you English call a freak, I should think."

"Ah, that's it, perhaps. Yes, I believe she is—a freak. And yet—and yet—I've often noticed it—she wants to obey men."

"Does she?"

"Or at any rate a man. Some man. I feel sure of that, too. Oh, how difficult it all is!" She said the last words with a sort of despair. "Just because she is so indifferent inside everyone wants—even Monsieur Marakoff—" She broke off. But she was thinking of Marakoff trying to get back his lost voice. Probably—she wasn't absolutely sure—but probably that too was for Pauline! And the hungry were left unfed. Not even the scraps for them! The irony of life seemed to her just then to be too terrible for endurance. But of course it must be endured.

She got up from the table. Everyone had gone except two or three of the waiters. "It's no use," she said to Khalil, who of course got up too. "It's really no use."

"No use? But I do not understand a girl like that. What is a girl for?"

She was moving to go out of the room. She felt his darkness accompanying her, felt it strangely, like cloud and fire. There was in her at that moment an acuteness of feeling that seemed diseased to her.

"For?" she said. They reached the dining-room door. She stopped. "I suppose she is for herself," she said. But she didn't say it with any real assurance. There was doubt in both voice and manner. "Why should she be *for*—just men for instance? That wouldn't be fair."

"Well, I do not understand all that. Beautiful girls—they are made for love, and that means for men."

"Oh, that's the oriental idea!" said Miss Vyvyan, trying vaguely to get away into lightness.

"Really? Well, I am sure Dr. Artz thinks that. And he is Swiss, isn't he?"

"Yes, I believe he is Swiss."

"And what about Fügler? He is Swiss, too."

"I don't know at all what Mr. Fügler thinks and feels about these things. Good night, Khalil Ibrahim."

He took her hand with his dark-colored hand. "Perhaps you are what they call now a feminist," he said.

"Oh, no!" she exclaimed. "I'm not indeed!" And then she went away.

He stood looking after her. "These English!"

XXXIV

"A FEMINIST! I a feminist!" Up in her bedroom Miss Vyvyan stood by the window and laughed. "A feminist!"

Actually she shook with laughter which she couldn't restrain, went on laughing till she became afraid of her laughter. But even her fear couldn't enable her to dominate that strange outburst. She laughed—and laughed till her body felt quite tired. And really her sense of humor was engaged in the business. Tears ran over her narrow cheeks. Really life was altogether too absurd, people's misunderstandings were too grotesque. Khalil Ibrahim's dark face looking at her, his voice saying, "Perhaps you are what they call now a feminist!" That "now" seemed to her a quite exquisite high light of humor, a real *trouvaille.*

"Oh!" And she laughed on. And then suddenly she remembered Mr. Iselle's imitation of animal voices under the tablecloth in the Pimlico lodging, and how she had laughed at that. And it seemed to her that she was always laughing, sometimes with tears, floods of them, just at the back of the laughter, sometimes without them. They were very close now. She knew that the laughter might suddenly merge into something horribly different from it. She must pull up. And then she saw herself in being on the Judgment Day, and greeting it with peal upon peal of laughter.

The word "hysteria" shone before what seemed to her staring mind in fiery letters, burning yellow letters, like a theater sign. She made a violent, a tremenduously fierce effort at self-control. It was successful. She stopped laughing, stopped abruptly. There was no dying away, no petering out in a series of fading chuckles. She just stopped. She was laughing and then she wasn't laughing.

She had on a black evening gown, old but excellent. She bought very few gowns, amazingly few, but what she did buy she got at a good London dressmaker's.

"I must take this off. That's the first thing to be done." And she took off the gown and took out of her wardrobe a plain coat and skirt. When that was on with a blouse under the coat, a narrow collar and neat stone-colored tie, she took off her evening shoes and put on her black brogues. Then she got out a small dark hat. While she was quickly putting it on she remembered Artz's remark about the beauty of her hair. And then she was on the very edge of laughter again, but managed not to give way to it.

And now then—where was she going? She was going to see someone that night before she went to bed, but whom?

Three people came up before her, almost as if they rose out of the carpet, and seemed to wait for her to make her choice: Pauline, Carl Fügler, and Dr. Artz.

It seemed to her that she kept them waiting for a very long time while she was trying to make up her mind about them. But they were wonderfully patient. Yes, even Carl Fügler, who was so tremendously vital that impatience was natural to him, as it is to most tremendously vital people.

Carl Fügler! Should she go to Carl Fügler and tell him that he was safe from at least one patient of Dr. Artz, whom perhaps—hideous thought—he had feared?

Or should she go to Pauline, try to find out what had happened about money, and warn her against Dr. Artz?

Or should she go to the fountain head? That meant going to the big house at the corner of Kreuzstrasse, that meant going to Dr. Artz.

Miss Vyvyan was a little creature naturally full of courage. And tonight, in her tremendously strung-up condition, the thought of facing the most formidable human being whom she knew tempted her, even lured her. For Artz was, she now knew, really the most formidable man she had hitherto met. Carl Fügler looked formidable, had a formidable manner, was formidable of speech. And he had, too, she was sure, a very powerful nature as well as a powerful brain and will. But he carried that chain Meyer had spoken of to her that evening, a tendency to kindness, the chain from which Dr. Artz was free, and so he was less formidable than Artz. The human being who is totally devoid of a tendency to kindness, however slight and rare, if such an one exists, is a deadly menace, must inevitably be a deadly menace to many. But could Meyer be right about Artz? Was that possible?

When Miss Vyvyan thought of what Artz was ready to do for the satisfaction of his peculiar and immense sense of humor, what, she now believed, he had actually done, she felt that Meyer must be right in his conviction, that his being right was possible.

She took up from its corner near the door a tightly furled, marvelously neat umbrella, opened the door—looked back.

The three figures that had risen out of the carpet were gone.

She turned out the light.

XXXV

DR. ARTZ was sitting in his library that evening, smoking a pipe after a very excellent dinner and a bottle of Château Lafite, and reading, of course in German, Nietzsche's "Human —All Too Human." Carl Fügler and he had at any rate one taste in common, besides a common love for music; they both found pleasure in Nietzsche. At this moment Dr. Artz was reading some of the aphorisms labeled collectively "Man in Society." Here was one about physicians, numbered three hundred and six:

The Most Dangerous Physicians.—The most dangerous physicians are those who, like born actors, imitate the born physician with the perfect art of imposture.

"Excellent!" said Dr. Artz to himself. "Excellent! But I am a born physician and all the same I am—dangerous!"

And he smiled as he puffed at his pipe and turned over a leaf, another and another.

Three hundred and thirty-five.

Fear of Our Neighbor.—We are afraid of the animosity of our neighbor, because we are apprehensive that he may thereby discover our secrets.

Dr. Artz paused over this, and the smile left his face.

He had, and he knew it, plenty of enemies. Many in Zurich disliked him. He was hated by the doctors, partly because of his cleverness and audacity, partly because of his arrogance and contempt for their capacities, chiefly because he made so much money and had attained such considerable notoriety. He was disliked by many of the younger men for reasons that he was well aware of. As to the women, he had his eager partizans among them. His remarkably strong personality inevitably attracted women of varying types. Still there were women in Zurich who thought ill of him, who were even bitterly set against him, on account of his treatment of his wives. All this he knew and he had never bothered much about it. "People are such fools!" he said to himself. "It's only the weak man who bothers about outside opinion."

Yet now he was held by that aphorism of Nietzsche, held in a brooding discomfort. For out of the crowd of those who disliked him, mostly for general reasons, had come forth one who had a personal reason for hatred. As he looked at the word "neighbor" he saw Meyer's smooth face and strangely reptilian eyes, his sparse carefully dyed hair and scraps of dyed whisker.

He had played a very dirty trick upon Meyer, and Meyer

would never forgive him. But hadn't it been worth while? If he succeeded with Marakoff his fortune was made. The whole world would know of him, must know of him. He was making a lot of money of course already, but not nearly as much as he wanted. Those two discarded women had to be paid for. Arranged divorces cost money. Too bad that it should be so! When a man was sick of a woman he ought to be able to get rid of her without having to pay her an income. Such parasites—women! He was sure Nietzsche had thought so. He was almost certain that Nietzsche had said so more than once in that diabolically striking way of his. Marakoff must bring him a solid fortune. But he had certainly a dangerous enemy in Meyer.

We are afraid of the animosity of our neighbor because we are apprehensive that he may thereby discover our secrets.

Meyer had uttered a threat. But surely it was only a threat that would never bear fruit in action! He would never dare to expose to the world his reasons for going into the *clinique* behind the Dolder. The whole world would laugh at him. There wouldn't be one to give him sympathy.

And yet one had only to look at Meyer's extraordinary eyes to see that he was a man who could be revengeful. And he, Artz, was presently going to supply him with another reason for hatred, a reason far more potent than even an operation that had turned out a failure.

But that had to be. He had resolved on that risk long ago; in fact on the day when they had all drunk that remarkably potent cocktail together in Carlton House Terrace. He wasn't going to be afraid of Meyer.

And yet that sentence of Nietzsche must have troubled him obscurely, for when the electric bell at the hall door was pressed by someone outside, and he heard it faintly tingling in the distance he started, and the book he was holding fell to the carpet.

As he was bending to pick it up the young man servant came

in and said in German, "The English lady asks to see you, Herr Doktor."

"What English lady?"

"The small English lady who used to come for *piqûres,* Herr Doktor."

"Do you mean Fraülein Vyvyan?"

"That's the name, surely, Herr Doktor."

"Fraülein Vyvyan at this time of night!" He hesitated. Then he said: "Show her into the drawing-room. I will come in a moment."

"Yes, Herr Doktor."

Directly the young man had gone Artz seemed to remember something. For he got up out of his chair with remarkable swiftness, and his short legs took him to the door like one in a race.

"Heinrich—" he began, opening the door slightly and pushing his big head forward. Then he softly shut the door. "Too late! But what does it matter?" It was only "the small English lady who used to come for the *piqûres.*"

He waited by the shut door for a minute or two. Then he opened it again, and pushing out his chest and stomach and drawing in his back he walked authoritatively across the hall to the drawing-room. "Ah, Miss Vyvyan! Very glad to see you. What have you come for, please?"

Miss Vyvyan, who was standing with her back to the door evidently looking at the portrait of a very fair woman which hung on the wall opposite to it, turned quickly round. "Oh! Good evening, Dr. Artz."

He held out his large hand, the hand of a clever operator. He noticed that she hesitated before she put hers into it. "Do sit down. I was in my library reading Nietzsche."

"Oh—were you?" She sat down. "It's an odd time to call, I know. Still I felt I must come."

His small eyes examined her with eager, with lambent curiosity. "Something important? You are not feeling well? But I am sure that—"

"Oh, I am perfectly well, thank you."

"You look wonderful."

"Wonderful—no, I don't!" she said, with profound irony. "Please don't say those things to me any more."

"What is the matter?" he asked, suddenly assuming an almost harshly authoritative tone and manner. "Please be good enough to tell me." The implication, conveyed intentionally to Miss Vyvyan, was, "Tell me why and be quick about it."

"Yes, I came here to tell you," Miss Vyvyan said.

Her voice and manner were so unusual, so utterly unlike what Dr. Artz was accustomed to from her, that he was secretly astonished. But he showed no astonishment. He only sat back in his chair, as usual appearing to puff out his oddly shaped body, and said, "Please?"

After a minute of silence, during which the thin little woman in front of him seemed to be plunged in deep thought, he said again, "Please?" in a louder voice, deliberately showing an impatience which he probably felt.

"Dr. Artz," Miss Vyvyan then said, without any of her usual volubility, "it was entirely through me that Pauline Iselle was able to leave London in order to be trained for opera abroad. You know that of course. It was I who asked Mr. Meyer to pay for her training, and it was because of his acceptance of my suggestion that we, Miss Iselle and I, came out here. You were responsible for our coming to Zurich."

"I certainly mentioned Monsieur Marakoff as an excellent teacher—which he is," said Dr. Artz calmly.

"I was responsible for her coming abroad. You were responsible for Zurich being chosen as the place of her education."

" 'Responsible' is, I think, scarcely the suitable word to use," said Dr. Artz, with a slight touch of irony. "Happening to be a friend of a great singer and teacher, and knowing him to be in need of pupils, I merely mentioned the fact. That can scarcely be said to constitute responsibility, I think."

"What I want to know is, why did you wish Pauline Iselle to be sent specially here—to Zurich?"

"But I did not."

"But I am quite sure you did," said Miss Vyvyan, with

something of her natural impetuosity. "For a long time I have thought it was on account of Mr. Meyer. But now I don't believe it was. Will you tell me?"

"Tell you what?"

"Tell me why you were resolved that we should come here instead of going to Milan as I had intended."

After a moment of apparent hesitation Dr. Artz said: "I really do not see why you should ask me this question, Miss Vyvyan, but as you and I are good friends I will answer it. It *was* because of Mr. Meyer that I wished Miss Iselle to come here."

"It was!" Her brown eyes were fixed upon him with a steady searching gaze. "But what did you intend?" she added.

Again he seemed to hesitate for an instant. Then he said: "I do not mind answering questions personal to myself, though I do not understand at all the reason why they are put. But I cannot reply to questions involving other people, patients of mine. That would not be fair. However—wait a moment." Again he hesitated, either sincerely or with the wish to produce a particular effect. "Perhaps I can say as much as this," he then said, "that Mr. Meyer conveyed to me in London his intention to pay for Miss Iselle's education only on certain terms."

"Really!"

"He wished her to come to Zurich."

"But you suggested it when we were all there, in the drawing-room."

Dr. Artz looked for a moment slightly embarrassed, or Miss Vyvyan believed so. "Oh, I knew he wished her to go to Zurich before that," he said, rather hastily.

"But he hadn't decided before that to pay for Miss Iselle's education," said Miss Vyvyan.

"How do you know that he hadn't?"

"Had he?"

"Mr. Meyer is not a man who tells all he intends to do or not to do till he considers that the proper moment to do so has arrived." Miss Vyvyan felt that probably she was being told

what was not true. But she could not prove that it was not true.

"It seemed to me that Mr. Meyer didn't make up his mind till that day, when we were there," she said. Dr. Artz said nothing. "Did you know his reason for specially wishing us—Miss Iselle—to come here?" she asked.

"Excuse me, please, Miss Vyvyan," said Dr. Artz, "but may I ask why you are putting all these questions to me?"

"Pauline Iselle is very young, and—and I feel that things are not as they ought to be."

"Not as they ought to be? I do not understand you."

Miss Vyvyan's eyes traveled to the two portraits of fair women which hung on the drawing-room wall, then looked again at Dr. Artz.

"I consider that as I came out with Pauline Iselle here, and as her parents practically put her in my charge, it is my duty to see that no harm comes to her."

As she said all this it sounded in her ears very obvious, very banal, and terribly English. She felt, even while saying it, that the only effect it would be likely to have on Dr. Artz would be the rousing in him of a feeling of satire. It was like the remark of a stupid governess, who delivered her soul in clichés.

"But is any harm coming to Miss Iselle?" he said. He spoke seriously. But his voice sounded bored. He seemed to be losing interest in the subject of their conversation. "She seems to me to be entirely intent on getting on with her singing. Her interest in men is surely far less than her interest in music. What has happened to make you so anxious about her?"

The question was asked with such absolute naturalness that Miss Vyvyan wondered whether Meyer was not entirely wrong in his conviction about Dr. Artz. Possibly he was carried away by hostility. It was certain that Artz had failed, either deliberately or accidentally, to give back to Meyer any semblance of vigor and virility. Perhaps Meyer had become so incensed at this failure that he misjudged the man who had made it. The princess has used the expression that Meyer "had his knife

into Artz." To her, Miss Vyvyan, Meyer had openly shown his hatred of Artz. He had even been horribly frank. There had been no attempt at concealment. He had been horribly frank, but had he been just, had he been right about Artz? Was Artz really the profound humbug Meyer had called him? He had of course been very cruel with her. She *knew* that. But even now she could not help wondering whether he was really intent on Pauline.

But those two portraits of girlish women on the drawing-room wall—didn't they back up all that Meyer had said?

"What has happened?" she said, playing for time.

"Yes." He had been looking at her intently. Now he said, "I know! It is Meyer!" Once again he had—it must be so—read her thoughts. "Meyer!" he repeated. "Yes—yes, it is Meyer." He leaned forward till his protuberant chest was very near to her. "Meyer has become my enemy," he said. "And I will tell you why. I tried my very best with him. It was important, very important to me to succeed with a man so well known as Meyer. I hoped I should succeed, though I knew I was taking a risk. I failed. I failed utterly. Do you care to know why? I will tell you. Meyer came to me too late. He was too old, even for me. He will never forgive me that—his being too old! That"—he spoke now with sudden savage irony—"that is how men are! It is clear to me now. Meyer has been trying to poison your mind about me. Is it not so?"

Miss Vyvyan did not answer the question.

"What has he said? But that it is easy enough to tell. I am no doubt a seducer of women. Is it not so? I am, perhaps, pursuing Miss Iselle. Is that it? I have shown so much interest in her, have I not? I have shown so much jealousy. When she sings in the dark with handsome young students on the lake I am crazy with jealousy. Eh? You must have remarked it. Of course it is all so plain! I am in love with Miss Iselle. I, a scientific man in middle age! I have nothing to do but to pursue young girls!"

He saw her eyes go again to the portraits.

"You think so, too, no doubt. Because, like most other

normal men, I am susceptible to the beauty and charm of women, I am suspect. It does not occur to you, I suppose, that a man cannot keep on and on loving and loving. I loved a woman once. She died in childbirth. Since her death I have done what many men do, I have tried to love again. Twice I have tried and failed." He pointed to the two portraits. "I have told you tonight what I have told to none else—that I have tried to love and failed. These are tragic things that a man does not care to talk about. But your little friend, Miss Iselle! She is pretty. I see that, of course. She has a voice of lovely quality. But is she interesting? No! She is wrapped up in her singing—she is a little egotist. Her one thought is to get on, to get into opera, to please the crowd. A girl can have seduction. But for that she must have temperament, the desire for men. That is how I see it at least. But how is one to long for a child whose mind is only set on an opera house? No, really! Unless one is a maniac, like Meyer."

A maniac! And how about the trinity of manias? "Oh, why why—why haven't I a sure instinct in psychology?" Miss Vyvyan asked herself. "What is the truth? Where is it?"

And then she thought of Carl Fügler. Hasn't untainted youth a sure instinct? And Carl Fügler hated Artz. But perhaps he was twisted out of shape by the hot jealousy of striving youth, of youth against which he and others considered that Artz was fighting. Hot heads don't always think clearly. Passionate eyes don't always see rightly. Miss Vyvyan longed for a touchstone, for something which would enable her to put a sure test to this extraordinary man.

"I suppose you know that Pauline Iselle will have to leave here?" she said slowly. "Mr. Meyer is withdrawing the allowance he was making her. So of course she can't stay on as she has no money of her own, and her parents are poor."

"But what a shame!" he exclaimed with energy. Perhaps nothing that he could have said would have surprised Miss Vyvyan more than just that. "Do you mean," he continued, "that that child has got to give up her ambition to be a singer? No, that is too bad . . . really!"

At this moment Miss Vyvyan said to herself, "Meyer was wrong. He *is* genuine. He has been cruel to me. But he is genuine."

"And with such a voice! You know how I love music. I find Miss Iselle quite uninteresting, but her voice is lovely. It will be a great shame if she has to give up. She could make an opera singer. She is on the way. But Marakoff will not give her up. I know that."

"But she can't pay her expenses here."

"No, really! And yet they are not great."

"But she hasn't the money."

"Look here," he said, with strong earnestness, "if it is so, if it has come to that, I will pay. Why not? It is I who have made a failure with Meyer. Why should he revenge himself on that child who has done nothing—who only wants to be let alone, and to sing? Find out, I beg of you, what is necessary to be done and I am willing to do it. I am not a poor man, as you see, and my passion is music. The money could be administered by you. That will be best. What do you say?"

She had never before seen Artz show genuine emotion, the emotion of an enthusiast—so natural, so spontaneous in herself. She was moved. She could not help being moved.

But then who had promised to pay for Pauline—before? On whom was she relying? It must be Carl Fügler. An arrow seemed to go into her heart.

"You are very kind," she said slowly. "But I don't think—" She paused.

"Yes?" he said.

"I don't think Pauline could possibly accept the money from you."

"Why not?"

"She scarcely knows you."

"Did she know Mr. Meyer well when she accepted his help?"

"No."

"Well then?"

"That was different."

"Yes?"

He seemed to be waiting for an explanation. But she had none to give. This interview was not going at all as she had imagined it would. She had come to attack Dr. Artz. She had thought of him as a subtle conspirator. And now here he was offering to help Pauline through herself. She was to administer the money he was offering. Meyer had surely led her wrong out of hatred. She got up.

"You are going?"

"Yes. I must go now."

He went with her to the drawing-room door. "You will think over my proposition?"

"It's most kind and generous of you. But I'm afraid it's quite out of the question." He opened the door. She stopped by it. "Besides"—again she looked at him steadily—"I don't think Pauline can stay on here."

"No?" he said, with no change of expression.

"So much has happened that—I think a complete change will be best. Her father wishes her to go to Milan."

"Oh, in that case no more need be said. Mr. Marakoff will be sorry, but I dare say you are right. So long as she doesn't have to give up her training." Again his voice sounded uninterested, almost bored. "And you think you can find the money for Milan?"

"I must see about that."

He did not offer to pay for Pauline at Milan. He seemed to have suddenly lost any interest he had had in the matter.

"Good night," he said, on the doorstep.

"Good night. Please forgive me for coming."

"Of course. I know how enthusiastic you are about your young protégée. And really I feel that you are right. As a singer she has a future."

"Only as a singer?" Miss Vyvyan could not help saying.

Artz shrugged his broad shoulders. "Frankly—as a human being I find her nil. But I believe in her voice. And with the public a really beautiful voice goes a long way."

"Yes, I know."

As she walked away over the gravel between the two lamps she heard the hall door shut behind her. She turned out of the garden and began to walk down the hill by Artz's garden wall. She had decided to go to the *pension.*

Meanwhile Artz, having shut the door, walked quickly to the telephone and rang up the *pension.* When he received a reply he asked if he could speak at once to Miss Iselle. Was she in? A servant's voice said that she was. "Kindly ask her to come at once to the telephone. Dr. Artz wishes to speak to her." There was a pause. Artz waited by the telephone. All the indifference had died out of his face. He now looked intent. His eyes shone with excitement.

After a time that seemed to him very long a clear voice was audible saying: "Yes. I am here. What is it, please?"

"Miss Vyvyan has just left me."

"Miss Vyvyan!" The clear voice sounded startled.

"Yes. You will see her almost directly, I feel sure."

"Did she say she was coming here?"

"No. But I am certain she is. She has made up her mind that you are to leave here and go to Milan."

"But I told her I meant to stay here."

"She says you cannot as you have no money."

"But I should have no more in Milan."

"She means to take you away—to Milan or perhaps back to London."

After an instant of silence Pauline's voice said, "But she can't unless I choose to go."

"And will you go?"

"No."

"My offer to you holds good. I believe in you. If Marakoff does his part I am willing to do mine. You can pay us both back out of your first earnings."

"You are awfully kind, but I don't think I ought to accept."

"If you don't then you will have to go."

"I don't want to go." A pause. "I can't go."

"One thing I want to ask of you."

"What is it?"

"Will you promise not to tell Miss Vyvyan I offered to pay for you?"

"Why?"

"Because I have just told her I was willing to pay, and she thinks I only thought of it while she was here."

"But what did she say?"

"That it was impossible—out of the question, and that it would be best for you to go to Milan."

"Oh—" There was a rather long pause. Then the voice said: "I am not a child any longer. I mean to do as I choose this time."

"And you will not tell her? If you do she will be furious. She considers that you are still entirely in her hands. She is jealous of any proposition that does not come through her. That is my reason for asking you to be silent. Please do not tell *anyone,* yet."

"I won't say anything."

"Not to anyone?"

"Not to anyone."

"She says she wishes you to have a complete change."

"I won't go."

"And surely you will allow me to join Marakoff in helping you out. He is my friend. I suggested him as your master. Have not I as much right to help as he has?"

"You *are* kind! Oh—someone is coming!" She rang off.

Dr. Artz went back to his library, relit his pipe, sat down again in his armchair and took up his volume of Nietzsche. By chance he opened it at the section called "Wife and Child," and his eyes fell on these words:

Girlish Dreams.—Inexperienced girls flatter themselves with the notion that it is in their power to make a man happy; later on they learn that it is equivalent to underrating a man to suppose that he needs only a girl to make him happy.

"She is inexperienced!" he murmured.

XXXVI

MISS VYVYAN was a naturally fast walker. That night she walked even faster than usual. She hurried to the *pension*. "Is Miss Iselle in, Hedwig?" she asked the maid who answered her ring.

"Yes, fraülein. She was at the telephone a moment ago, but I think she has gone to her room."

"I'll go and see." As Miss Vyvyan hastened along the corridor she wondered to whom Pauline had been speaking through the telephone. Perhaps to Carl Fügler. Surely to Carl Fügler.

She knocked and Pauline answered. As Miss Vyvyan went in something struck her. It seemed to her that Pauline had been expecting her. But how could that be?

"I've just come in for a few minutes, dear." She kissed Pauline on the forehead. "You aren't busy?"

"No."

"What were you reading? Oh, your anthology. Do you often read poetry?"

"Not very often. You must sit in this chair."

"Oh—well! I shan't stay long. Thank you, dear." She sat down. Now she felt sure that Pauline had been expecting her. There was something softly defiant in the girl's expression, Miss Vyvyan thought, even in the look of her slim, rather tall body. Somehow she looked like one who was ready to say no. Miss Vyvyan felt that she must be very careful with Pauline that evening. But she must say what she had come to say. That was essential. Things couldn't, simply couldn't, go on as they were going. The complications here in Zurich were too great. Something definite had to be done. But tact was necessary, supreme tact. And then she said:

"Pauline, it was really through me that you came here. Wasn't it?"

After a moment of hesitation Pauline answered: "In a way I suppose it was."

"In a way?"

"I mean that you took me to Mr. Meyer's, and in fact I met him through you."

"Exactly. And then he made his offer and so you came here."

"Yes."

"So I am responsible."

"Responsible?"

"Yes, responsible in this matter. I feel this responsibility very much."

"Oh."

"It weighs on me."

"Does it?" The girl's voice sounded cold. And her silvery gray eyes looked cold as she sat gazing at Miss Vyvyan.

"Mr. Meyer, as you know, has withdrawn—or I mean he's going to withdraw—his help from you. After this month, unless you do what he wishes, there will be no more money coming in."

"Do you want me to go on being helped by Mr. Meyer?" said Pauline. "Do you want me to go to Milan as he does?"

"I scarcely know any more what I want. Things have become so— But my wishes don't seem to matter very much."

"Do you wish me to go on owing everything to Mr. Meyer?" The question sounded inflexible, as if the questioner meant to have a definite answer.

"I don't say I do. But if you are left without money, what is to happen?" Pauline didn't answer. She seemed to be waiting. Miss Vyvyan went on. "Pauline dear, I've been thinking everything over as carefully as I can, and I don't see how you can stay on here. You can't manage. It's impossible. I feel we must go away."

"But Mr. Marakoff will teach me for nothing. Where else can I find anyone to do that?"

"But you have to live."

"Wherever I went I should have to live."

"Yes, of course."

"Do you mean you want me to go back to London? to daddy and mother? But I want to sing."

"Suppose we went to Milan together?"

"And Mr. Meyer is to pay?"

Miss Vyvyan looked at the girl. No, that was impossible. That child! Meyer was ruled out in that moment. Miss Vyvyan —it seemed like that—made a desperate effort and returned to herself. Not even to her better self! But just that—to herself. "No, Pauline. He shall not pay."

"But then who will?"

"We'll see. Something must be done. I could—" She stopped. "Who will pay here if you stay on here?" Pauline didn't answer. She looked down. "You said you would 'manage.' How can you? Mr. Marakoff is very poor. He certainly couldn't do more than teach you for nothing. Even that is a great deal. He depends on his lessons for his living."

"I shall pay him back."

"Some day. But has he offered to pay your expenses here?"

"Oh no!"

"But then who has? Has anybody?"

"I can live on very little."

"Little—yes. But not on nothing! Nobody can. Who is to pay that very little?"

"I—I don't know whether daddy would help me," said Pauline, in a low and surely obstinate voice.

"Your father? He can't. We both know that. He isn't lucky and—"

"No, daddy isn't lucky."

"Look here, Pauline," said Miss Vyvyan, in a more decided voice and leaning forward. "It's no use our going on like this. Has somebody offered to pay your expenses here if you stay on? I mean your living expenses?"

"I will manage somehow," said the girl, still in the obstinate voice. "I mean to spend scarcely anything."

"Somebody has offered. Who is it? But I think I know. It's Carl Fügler."

Pauline flushed. The red mounted to the roots of her pale yellow hair. "Herr Fügler!" she exclaimed. "As if I would accept money from *him!*"

"Then it isn't Carl Füger?"

"Of course not!"

"But then surely—no, it can't be!"

"Please don't let us—"

"It can't be Dr. Artz!"

"I don't wish to talk about all these things. All I want is to be let alone and allowed to go on with my singing. Oh, *why* can't I be allowed just to go on learning how to sing?"

"Pauline, you must tell me. I have a special reason for asking. Is it Dr. Artz?"

Pauline got up from her chair. She was evidently in great distress. "Please, Miss Vyvyan, don't ask me all these questions. You have been very good to me, but now I must shift for myself. I must stand on my own feet. If I'm to be an opera singer I must learn to look out for myself. Mr. Marakoff says so and—"

"It *is* Dr. Artz! Do you deny it?"

"I don't deny anything. All I want is to—"

"I have just come from Dr. Artz and he— Then Mr. Meyer was right. He told me it was Dr. Artz who had offered to pay for you."

"Mr. Meyer knows nothing about it!" exclaimed Pauline, with a vehemence which Miss Vyvyan had never supposed her capable of. "I have never spoken to him about my affairs. I loathe him, and I loathe knowing that he has spent money upon me."

"But—"

"Mr. Meyer is a horrible old man and I never wish him to come near me again. Anyhow now I have refused to have any more of his money he has no right to interfere with me. I want to be let alone, and I *will* be let alone."

"But, Pauline, you can't—you mustn't accept money from Dr. Artz."

"Have I said that he has offered me money? Why should you imagine—"

"Pauline, you're not being straight with me. I feel it. I know it. Were you expecting me to come here this evening?"

"Why should I expect you? You scarcely ever—"

"But were you expecting me? I had the feeling when I came in that you weren't surprised, in fact that you had been expecting me. Wait! And you had been at the telephone just before I came. I know! It was Dr. Artz! Dr. Artz had been speaking to you!" Miss Vyvyan felt clairvoyant at this moment. Things hitherto hidden in the dark had suddenly become clear to her. Or it seemed so. "Dr. Artz guessed that I should come here and told you so. Wasn't that it?"

"I won't answer all these questions. It isn't fair of you to come here and cross examine me as if I were doing dreadful things. I have never done anything wrong. All I want is to get on with my singing and be successful in opera. It's too bad how everyone tries to interfere with me. Why can't I be let alone? Why am I never to have any freedom? I'm not a child. I am twenty-one. It's impossible for me to make any real progress with all this constant interference, and everyone attending to me and bothering about me. Mr. Marakoff and Carl Fügler are the only ones who have always been kind to me, and now—" She stopped abruptly.

"Yes? And now? Go on, Pauline!" But the girl stood with tightly shut lips. "And now Dr. Artz! That's what you were going to say, isn't it?"

"I've nothing to say about Dr. Artz. I don't believe he's really interested in me at all. But he *does* care for music. That's something! I am sick of being always mixed up with my singing."

"What do you mean?"

"That I want to be helped because musicallv I am worth something, that I want to be helped because of my *voice,* not because of all sorts of other things."

"Haven't I tried to help you because of your voice?"

"Not only because of that!"

"What then?"

"I don't want to speak about it."

"But I want you to tell me."

"No, I'd rather not."

"But I want you to. Tell me, Pauline."

"I think you like to have someone to order about."

After a moment of silence Miss Vyvyan said in an uneven voice, "So you think that was my reason for trying to get you on!"

"No—no! Not only that! But I think you wanted me to belong to you and have no will at all of my own. At first I was able to be what you wished. You are so talented and I was nothing. But now I feel I must make my own way or I shall never be anything. I *can't* go on always being a slave in my music." There was more than mere defiance in the girl's voice as she said that, there was a quivering of genuine passion. "I'm very grateful to you," she added. "I shall always be grateful, always. But that's how it is now."

"I quite understand," said Miss Vyvyan. She spoke in a rigid voice and all her body felt rigid. In her simplicity Pauline had found words which had wounded Miss Vyvyan as she had never been wounded before, as she had never thought she could be wounded. "Perhaps you are right. I dare say you are right. Still I—"

No, she couldn't try to explain. The main body of truth remains unaffected by the addition of minor truths to it. They go for nothing. Besides, how can one try to explain one's own generosities, one's own humane impulses, one's own perhaps nobilities? "Youth has hard eyes!" Miss Vyvyan thought in that cruel moment. "They see with dreadful clearness, and yet how much they miss!"

"Well, I must really be going now."

"You aren't angry with me?"

"No—no."

"You made me speak. I didn't want to."

"Why shouldn't you speak? Why shouldn't you say what you feel about things? Anyhow from this moment I promise you that I will never interfere with you again, never. You —you need never be afraid of my trying to lay my hands on your life. Do what you wish to do. Be what you wish to be. Get help from whoever you think can help you most effec-

tively. I dare say I have interfered too much. But I think my motives—but no, we won't go into that. It's often difficult enough to understand oneself why one does a thing without expecting other people to understand why one does it. You needn't be afraid of me any more, Pauline."

She went to the bedroom door. Pauline followed her anxiously. "But of course I'm not afraid of you. How could I be?"

"That's right. I'm glad to hear you say that." Miss Vyvyan opened the door. "Good night. I'm afraid I interrupted you in your reading."

Her eyes went to the row of books which she had given to Pauline. Her books! She remembered her careful choice of them. She had given a good deal of time to the choosing of those books. "I'm glad you read."

And then suddenly she hurried away down the passage. She had a dreadful feeling that something was going to break in her and that she must get away and be quite alone as soon as possible.

Pauline stood by the door looking after her. Then she shut the door, threw herself on her bed and burst into tears. It seemed to her at that moment that she must have loved Miss Vyvyan without really knowing it. She felt horribly lonely in that hostile place.

XXXVII

AFTER that explanation with Pauline it seemed to Miss Vyvyan that there was nothing more for her to do in Zurich. She was rejected, utterly rejected. The girl for whom she had taken so much trouble, for whom indeed she had lived —so she thought of it at least—for years, giving her thought, her time, her talent unsparingly, even begging money of others, braving refusals, standing up against irritation and hostility, this girl with a sentence had struck her to the earth.

"I think you like to have someone to order about."

The brutality of life! And the utter loneliness of it! As she walked home in the cold and the darkness—home to a hotel, Miss Vyvyan longed as she had never longed before to believe in a religion, to have the help of a religion. But that was impossible. She wasn't a religious woman though she was what people usually call a good woman. She just wasn't made that way. God hadn't been kind to her, hadn't given her faith. And so she must do without.

"Do without! Do without! That is my destiny—always to do without!" she said to herself under her breath, as she came on to the lake front.

The night was black, lit by golden eyes in the distance where Zurich, the main part of Zurich, stretched from shore to shore, from the left to the right bank of the lake.

"Everyone's to have what they want except me!" A grotesque assertion! Yet she made it just then. She even believed it. She saw a contented, and even a happy world, herself only excluded from it. "Nobody wants me."

She shivered, not from cold. (She was wrapped in her old fur.) She shivered from loneliness.

When she reached the hotel she felt exhausted. This was quite a new experience for her. She was so strong and wiry, her health was so good, that it was a rare thing for her to feel tired. But what a pilgrimage had been hers that day: Pauline, the princess, Meyer, Khalil Ibrahim, Dr. Artz—and then Pauline again! It had been too much. How human beings can tire you! How they can tire out the soul of you! And then she sat down, sank down almost in the deserted lounge and pressed a bell. Presently a young waiter came.

"Yes, madame?"

"Please bring me some black coffee, enough for two cups."

"Yes, madame."

Miss Vyvyan knew she was being foolish. But she didn't care. Sleep in any case was surely impossible. And she needed something to fight her exhaustion. Coffee to her was a nerve tonic. She must have it.

When the young waiter brought it she poured it out and

put her lips to the cup greedily. When she had finished the first cup she waited. The coffee acted quickly. Soon she was conscious of its stimulus. Now her body felt very tired but there was a quickening of the mind. Nerve energy, too, seemed to beat in her. She felt that if she were to listen intently she would surely hear the throb of it. The coffee had increased her misery, had made it much more energetic. She felt it now like a hardy thing within her, the sort of thing that endures, a difficult thing to get rid of. She would certainly never get rid of it unless—

What a crazy creature she was with her ridiculous "unless"!

She poured out another cupful of coffee. She drank it and the nerve stimulus increased. It was getting late now. Her visits to Dr. Artz and Pauline had taken up a good deal of time, with the walks to and fro. Nobody seemed to be about, though the veranda was still lighted up and the young waiter no doubt was still within call. The strong restlessness that belongs to night hours when sleep is far away took hold on her. She longed to do something. There was a grand piano in one of the public rooms of the hotel. If only she dared go to it and release herself in music! But that was impossible. Music at this late hour—for Zurich isn't a *ville de nuit,* like Paris —would create a scandal.

She opened the coffee-pot and looked into it. There was still some coffee at the bottom of it. The young waiter had been lavish and had brought more than she had asked for. Although she knew she was preparing deliberately a sleepless night for herself Miss Vyvyan poured out the rest of the coffee. It nearly filled the cup. She let it stand. How black it was, black and strong—like life, life the monster, life of which she was the prey. Of which she was the prey unless—

Again that "unless" came to her, and it seemed to her that it had been put into her mental vocabulary by Dr. Artz, the "profound humbug" whom Meyer had seen into so much more clearly than she had. For she had no longer any doubt that Artz had deliberately played with and deceived her that night.

He had offered to pay for Pauline before he had spoken to her about the matter. With her he had cleverly, with admirable naturalness, with an exquisite travesty of sincerity, acted a part. And directly she had left his house divining her intention he had telephoned to Pauline and had certainly put her on her guard, had warned her not to say what had happened. Pauline's native sincerity had opened even the blind eyes of Miss Vyvyan. The girl might be a singer. Certainly she was not yet an actress. But, with time, doubtless Artz would turn her into one. Meyer was right. Artz meant to marry Pauline. Probably he had always meant to have her as his possession from the moment when he had first seen her in London. She belonged to his type, the silvery fair type.

Well, Miss Vyvyan had been willing to protect the girl, but now she must go her own way, or what she thought was her own way. Really, it would certainly be Dr. Artz's way. In Mr. Meyer's brutal words Dr. Artz would take another "bite" out of youth.

Miss Vyvyan felt sure of that. It had come to this that now she thought of Artz as possessing an irresistible force bound to accomplish that which the possessor of it willed. And how marvelously patient Artz could be. His power of patience must be owing to his certainty of always eventually getting what he wanted.

So now he would eventually get Pauline. In spite of Miss Vyvyan, in spite of Meyer, in spite of Khalil Ibrahim, in spite of Marakoff, he would get her. He would get her even in spite of Carl Fügler—wouldn't he?

But there a note of interrogation sounded for the first time in Miss Vyvyan's mind. For she saw before her Carl Fügler's eyes, the determined and pitiless eyes of youth, the formidable eyes of youth unafraid and clear-seeing.

Carl Fügler hadn't been blind as she had been blind. But surely he didn't know what she knew, that her intimacy with him, her golf intimacy, had been engineered by Dr. Artz. Had that been part of a sardonic experiment, or had Dr. Artz really believed that she, in spite of her years and her monkey face,

possessed something possibly attractive to the young student? He must surely have thought so, or why should he have taken the trouble to bring them together? Artz was not a man who took thought, laid a plan and carried it out for nothing.

She remembered those games of golf. It seemed to her that they had taken place a very long time ago. They had been very wonderful. In her mind now they stood for romance, for the total romance of her life—those few games on the height of the Dolder. During those games Carl Fügler had been fighting her amicably and thinking surely of no one else. For the time he had seemed to belong to her, to want no one else at all. She had been able to fight him effectively enough to give him real trouble and to make him respect her, and she had been able to interest, to rouse, to hold his brain-attention. And he had liked her. She knew that. He had genuinely liked her and he had thought her a gifted woman.

Was it even now too late.

The strong coffee was doing its work, and something else was doing its work, too, the mysterious something grafted in her body by Dr. Artz. It was surely this something which now made her feel that she could not give up without one last throw for happiness.

Pauline, she felt certain, loved no one as yet. What she had said to Khalil Ibrahim was true. He could not probably believe it. Nevertheless it was true. Pauline was strangely indifferent to love matters. Some day no doubt that indifference would fade, but not till the voice had had its way, not till the lark had soared and, soaring, had sung as a lark should sing. And that time was not yet. It was not yet, and perhaps before that happened Pauline would be mistress of the big house at the corner of Kreuzstrasse. Perhaps indeed it would be Dr. Artz who would be the one to get rid of that indifference which Khalil Ibrahim thought of as freakish, and which was certainly very unusual.

Since the events of that evening Miss Vyvyan had succumbed fatalistically to the power of a conviction, which till now had not governed her. This conviction was that nothing could stop

Dr. Artz from having his way with Pauline. Certainly she had had a moment of doubt, which had come to her with the thought of Carl Fügler. But the doubt, she now found, didn't persist. Weighing up Carl Fügler and Dr. Artz the scale dipped in Dr. Artz's favor. Carl Fügler was brave, ardent, keen, and a fighter. But Dr. Artz was diabolically clever, and moreover possessed a long knowledge of the world and of women which Carl Fügler couldn't match. Carl Fügler was physically attractive, Miss Vyvyan thought attractive beyond all other men. Dr. Artz was physically almost repulsive, except for his striking head. Nevertheless Dr. Artz had something—she could hardly have said exactly what it was—which put him on winning sides. She remembered how amazed she had been when Amber Braybridge had told her that Dr. Artz had been married three times and to three beautiful girls. She was not amazed when she thought of that now.

Dr. Artz was one of the human beings who know how to get what they want. And that was surely a faculty of the will prompted by plans conceived in the brain.

She had thought of defending Pauline. In imagination her chivalry had sprung to the rescue. But that sort of thing was over and done with.

"I think you like to have someone to order about."

Pauline must go her own way. She was certainly going to allow Dr. Artz to share with Marakoff the expenses of her career. When Miss Vyvyan thought of that she felt absolved from all duty to Pauline in respect of Carl Fügler.

The night was growing late now. Now and then someone passed through the veranda from the main door, coming back from some entertainment, some dinner, cinema or concert, or perhaps from a theater. The young waiter came and cleared away the coffee tray, then asked Miss Vyvyan significantly whether she wanted anything more. She said no. He bade her good night and retreated, probably to bed. Some of the lights were turned out. The night porter appeared more than once, stood about and looked at the English lady who sat there alone with doubtful eyes. She took no notice of him. He left her

there alone under a light, wondering. What could she be up to? She must be waiting for someone who was out and who would be coming back presently. Some man, the night porter supposed. These elderly English ladies were very enduring, very enterprising. He had often wondered why this particular lady stayed on so long all alone in the hotel. Perhaps he would know tonight. But no one came to her. And presently he shut the great door with a bang and and fastened it for the night. If anyone were still out and came back now, or much later on, he would have to ring to be let in.

At a little past twelve o'clock the bell sounded and the hall porter went slowly to the door and unfastened it. A tall dark young man with a ravaged face was outside. His dark eyes had a burning light in them. His expression was savage, so savage that it startled the heavy Zuricher.

Although as he supposed a democrat, like every proper-thinking Swiss, the hall porter bowed solemnly and respectfully to "his Highness"; but Khalil Ibrahim made no acknowledgment, though he stared at the man for an instant, with the unseeing eyes of one in a rage whose enemy was at a distance. Then he moved away quickly leaving the hall porter to shut the door.

Miss Vyvyan had been roused by the sound of the bell, by the movement of the porter and the noise of the door being opened, then shut. Quickly she glanced at her watch. "Past midnight!" She realized the night loneliness. She wasn't sleepy. She wasn't going to sleep. But she couldn't stay down here any longer. And she got up quickly and made for the lift. By the cage, waiting for the night porter to come to take him up, she found Khalil Ibrahim.

"Miss Vyvyan!" he said. "How did you get in? I did not see you at the door."

"I was in. I've been in for a good while."

"You were sitting up all alone?"

"Yes."

His dark fierce eyes were asking her questions, and he saw questions in hers, which didn't make him self-conscious. "I see you have been out," he said.

"Yes. I went to see—friends." A commonplace enough remark, but she didn't make it in a commonplace way. The pause, and the irresistible and melancholy satire which came to him with the final word, affected him strangely. What a strange little ugly woman this was, but there was a lot of meaning in her!

The night porter came and opened the lift door.

"Second floor, please," said Miss Vyvyan, stepping in.

"Yes, madame."

Khalil Ibrahim followed her into the lift. As they went up he said, "I did not go out to see friends."

"No?"

"No. I went to the Bellevue Bar."

"Did you?"

The lift stopped and the porter opened the door. Miss Vyvyan got out. Khalil followed.

"Good night, madame."

"Good night," said Miss Vyvyan.

The gate shut. The lift descended. Miss Vyvyan and Khalil were left in the faintly lit corridor.

"The students go there, you know. One always finds chaps from the university there—and others."

"Yes? I've never been there."

"There was quite a crowd tonight." His fierce eyes held hers. She felt he had something to say to her, and wondered very much what it was.

"Yes?" she said again, and waited.

"Quite a crowd. Your friend Carl Fügler was there with Harry Van Deyn. You know—the American boy who lives in the *pension*."

"I know."

"I had the hell of a row with Fügler." It struck Miss Vyvyan just then that perhaps Khalil had been drinking. Not that he was drunk. He wasn't. But he looked like a man blazing with excitement, and there was something hot and unnatural about his excitement.

"Why?" she said.

"It was about Miss Iselle." She waited. "I mentioned her. He—he's only a damned blustering Swiss with no manners—he tried to shut me up, said she was not for dark-skinned—" Evidently he was about to say some word and abruptly checked it on his lips. "He said she was not for"—he began again—"for dark-skinned fellows from overseas like me. I said that if he thought she was for him he was making a mistake. Someone else had marked her down."

"Marked her down!" said Miss Vyvyan, breathing through the words. "Who?"

"Artz, of course!"

"Did you tell Herr Fügler that?"

"Of course I did before the whole crowd of them. But there was the hell of a row. What is the matter?"

"Nothing. Good night, Khalil Ibrahim—monseigneur."

She went away down the passage, but not quickly. Her feet, in the neat black brogues, seemed to drag on the carpet. She opened a door. A light sprang up. She went in and the door shut behind her.

XXXVIII

ON the following day, after a sleepless night, driven by her demon, Miss Vyvyan took a long walk in the woods near the Dolder. Towards afternoon she came to a small wayside restaurant, and the thought struck her, "Where am I?" She didn't know. Deep in thought she had wandered far. The sight of this wooden eating house made her realize that she was hungry and growing tired, and she went into the little restaurant to inquire for the shortest way back to Zurich and perhaps to get something to eat.

She was welcomed by a fat middle-aged man in shirt sleeves and a long blue apron.

"Can you tell me the shortest way back to Zurich?" she asked.

The man, smiling, directed her and told her to go this way

and that; then she would come to so and so, and then, a little further on, to so and so.

"And the tram? Can I take the tram anywhere?"

"If you do as I say, fraülein, you will come to the Zurichberg Sonnenbad," the man said, always smiling. "When you reach it do not go on down the hill. Go up the path to the Sonnenbad, leave that on your right, and take the path through the Naturheil-Verein where the huts of the nature-lovers are. Go out through the gate at the other end and you will come to the tram line."

"Thank you. How far is it?"

"More than an hour's walk."

"So much as that! Well, I must have something to eat before going on."

The man looked delighted. She sat down at a table covered with a blue and white cloth. When she had eaten the meal he was able to supply, the fat man suggested that the fraülein would wish to take coffee. But Miss Vyvyan refused with a decisive quickness which seemed to surprise him.

"My bill, please. And then I must go. It gets dark so early now."

"Oh, you will have time to get down to Zurich before dark comes on if you walk fast, fraülein."

He went to fetch the bill. When Miss Vyvyan had paid it he accompanied her to the door and again repeated his instructions. "And mind you pass through the Naturheil-Verein and come out on the far side, fraülein. There the tram line is. *Auf Wiedersehen!*"

"*Auf Wiedersehen,* and thank you very much."

She started briskly on the way home. She would be tired when she got down to Zurich, very tired, but that would be all the better. Fatigue would surely enable her to rest. The body would for once get the upper hand of the mind. And that night she would sleep. She had a longing for some hours of unconsciousness.

It was four o'clock when at length, having once missed her way, inquired and been redirected, she got to the Zurich-

berg, and in a deep lane found the sign indicating the entrance to the now deserted Sonnenbad. She mounted a rather steep path and saw a wooden building and long lines of wooden palisade to right and left of the entrance. Remembering the fat man's careful instructions she turned to the left, having the palisade of the sunbath enclosure reserved for men on her right, and came into the pathway that runs from end to end of the plot of land divided up into the coquettish little properties of the nature-lovers, tiny estates, each adorned with its tiny dwelling.

She looked down the long pathway. It was empty. She looked to right and left of her. The little houses were mostly shuttered. She saw no one in the now rather ragged and bare bits of garden, which must be so attractive in spring, in summer and early autumn.

She had never been here before, though she had often heard of the place, and remembered of course that Carl Fügler owned a hut and a scrap of ground up here. Carl Fügler! Which of the properties was his? She wondered. She wondered intensely as for a moment she stood still at the beginning of the path. Pauline had been here. But Miss Vyvyan had never been invited by Carl Fügler. He had been her opponent at golf. He had never been her host.

How private these little separated rooms looked. She thought of the words "a lodge in a garden of cucumbers." Which was *his* lodge, the lodge to which he had invited Pauline?

These little dwellings suggested intimacy. Intimacy! Her heart ached. A pang which she thought of as a fire-tipped arrow clove her. If she could sit in one of those garden dwellings, the door shut, alone with Carl Fügler! If he wanted her to be there with him, her and nobody else! Pauline didn't care. Or did she? No; surely she didn't really care. She was enclosed in her ambition as in a cage. Miss Vyvyan had often spoken of Pauline as a lark. Now she thought of her as a canary singing blithely in its cage, quite content to be there so long as it could sing.

Why did men care so much for those who didn't care, who

couldn't care? What was it in indifference, in detachment, that lured men, that enticed them? Was there then a magic in indifference? Did detachment hold a spell? And was ardor a quality repellent, that caused all doors to shut? Who could understand life? "I never shall!" Miss Vyvyan said to herself. And then she began to walk slowly along the path looking at the huts, or tiny houses, and asking herself as her eyes rested on each one, "Can that be his—or that—or that?"

Ah, there was one with a light in the tiny window! The owner was inside surely, and though there was still gray daylight had lit his home up for cheerfulness's sake.

As Miss Vyvyan looked at the solitary and unexpected light a conviction came to her that she was looking at Carl Fügler's dwelling, that it was he who had lit that lamp, that he was inside with it. And perhaps with Pauline?

She stood still, waited a moment, then went up to the wire fence and called out, "Herr Fügler! Herr Fügler!" What did her voice sound like? Very strange, surely, strange and ugly. "Herr—Fügler!"

A head was thrust forth, a head containing a pair of formidable eyes. At the same moment Carl's powerful baritone voice exclaimed in German, "Who's calling?"

"Herr Fügler!" Miss Vyvyan repeated. She wanted to say more, but could find nothing else.

"Miss Vyvyan!" said Carl, coming out of the hut into his small bit of garden, and showing his tall strong figure in a blue and gray pull-over, knickerbockers and stockings, and his bare head with rather rough hair. "Miss Vyvyan! You up here!"

His voice sounded anything rather than welcoming, astonished perhaps, or hostile, she thought. He came down reluctantly along a tiny path to the fence and stood by it looking at her.

"I was walking. I've been for a very long walk in the woods."

"Yes?" His steady eyes were hard with inquiry—surely with suspicious inquiry. "Yes? In the woods—have you? Back to

Dr. Artz's paradise of healing?" Deep ruts appeared in his forehead between the bumpy temples. "More treatment?"

"No. I had a very bad night. I felt I must have air. I had something to eat en route in a wooden restaurant. A man there directed me home this way. He said I should strike the tram line if I went out by the gate at the end of this path."

"He is right. You will."

Miss Vyvyan looked at the light. Evening, the early evening of winter, was coming on. It would be dark enough in that low-roofed dwelling without a light. Was anyone there? Was Pauline in there? She longed to know. She felt as if she could not go away without knowing. It seemed to her that there was someone hidden in the hut, lying lost till she should go, someone who could probably hear the sound of their voices. "I—I knew you had a garden up here," she said.

"Yes, I come up here sometimes when I want to be alone."

"It's quiet now."

"Yes."

"I suppose in summer—"

"Oh, in summer there is a lot of us. Plenty of kids, too."

His eyes were, she thought, repellent. They were holding her off, weren't they? She remembered the princess and Khalil Ibrahim, and sickened. She ought to go. Of course she ought to go. It was undignified hanging on here. But she couldn't go. She was held against something in her which kept saying, "Go! Go or he'll despise you more than he does already!"

"It must be lovely up here in summer."

"Yes, it is all right then."

"What dear little houses they are! Yours especially!"

He directed upon her a long and searching look. There was no pretense about it. His strong eyes blatantly searched her. Then he said: "Come in if you like and have a look at it." She was astonished. Something in her seemed to melt, and to be distributed all through her. Then Pauline wasn't there! "Oh—may I?" she said.

"I will open the gate. You must go back a little."

She obeyed. He opened the gate. She passed through and

followed him into his minute domain. As she crossed the threshold of his hut she had the definite feeling that she would confront a crisis in her life. Here something would happen that would change things, determine things, that would as it were reach out into the future and do something tremendous to that future.

In the hut she looked round. His room! His intimate room impregnated with his personality! Suddenly she felt weak, even dizzy. But she managed to stand firm and believed she showed nothing unusual. "I like it," she said. "Who's that? Oh, Dante!" She bent and looked at the carved wooden plaque.

"Yes," said Carl, in his strong voice. "Do sit down. Let me make you some coffee."

"Oh—no!" she exclaimed.

"Why, what is the matter?"

"It's only that I've been drinking too much coffee. Yesterday, last night, early this morning! I never slept last night—not for a moment."

"You do look pretty bad," he said, much more gently. "Sit down. This is my best chair."

"Oh, thank you." She sat down. The chair was comfortable. The room was warm. A stove had been lit as well as the lamp. "Were you reading?" she asked.

"No—just thinking." Again the deep ruts showed in his square forehead. He stared before him frowning.

"Weren't you even smoking?"

"I was just going to light up my pipe when I heard you calling my name."

"It must seem very odd my—"

"Odd! Who cares whether a thing is odd or not? I do not. I loathe all conventionality. But I do not see how you knew I was here."

"I didn't."

"But you called out."

"I felt as if the light was yours."

"That is strange!" he said. And again his searching eyes were on her.

"Do smoke!" she said. "Do light your pipe."

"I will." He went to the table to get it. While he was filling the bowl with tobacco she watched his big hands, the hands of an out-of-doors man.

"I was more tired than I knew," she said, softly.

"I wish you would have some coffee. I have not got any tea."

"No, I daren't. My nerves. I feel my nerves today."

"Yes, I should say you do." He had lit his pipe. Now he sat down on the rough divan and carelessly stuck an old cushion behind him, pushing it up till it came in contact with his thick mop of auburn hair.

Why were all his movements so dear to her, so perilously dear? She shouldn't have called. She shouldn't have come in here. It was madness to be here. She knew it. But she couldn't go. She couldn't contemplate going. Yet she didn't know what to say to him, and she was afraid of him. She was afraid of his eyes. She was afraid of his thoughts about her. She was full of a sense of shame that she felt as red, as if it were all red. Yet something in here, some desperate hardy thing drove at her, tried to impel her to the very conduct the mere thought of which was filling her with this dreadful sense of shame. Never had she felt so completely at war with herself as now. And her nervous excitement was intense.

She felt that he must be aware of it. Always, from the very beginning of their acquaintance, she had been certain that he was tremendously observant and thought hard about what he observed. She was positive that he had thought hard about her. Probably he was thinking hard about her at this very moment. He looked as if he were. Was he, could he be, classing her with Princess Teresco? She longed to make a protest, to utter a plea, to bring him somehow to a kindly, even to a tender opinion of her. Once surely he had genuinely liked her. But then had come that horrible incident in Marakoff's studio. And later, she had lost her head, she had shown him too plainly that—she had shown herself too plainly as a product of Dr. Artz.

Sitting in the lamp-lit hut she actually found that hideous expression in her mind. The voice of her mind uttered the words silently. She said to herself: "I am a product of Dr. Artz. And *he* hates Dr. Artz." And then she seemed to be looking at her own madness. For hadn't it been madness on her part to put herself in Dr. Artz's hands because of Carl Fügler? Yes, that was what she had done.

In that moment she saw Dr. Artz as the most deadly enemy a woman ever had. And she couldn't now release herself from his influence. The slightest movement of Carl Fügler told her that, proved it to her, the meaning his hands had for her, the effect the way his hair grew had on her. This little room of the hut was flooded for her with a marvelous atmosphere in which she longed to stay forever shut up alone with this tall, bold and yet sensitive Swiss youth in the blue and gray pull-over. And that was because of Dr. Artz. If she had never met Dr. Artz and had met Carl Fügler, then Carl Fügler wouldn't have meant all this to her, couldn't have meant it. For she had actually never felt about a man like this till she had met Dr. Artz. The cold fact that even in the hut she was able to realize this meant more than she knew.

"What is it?"

She started. "How do you mean?" she said, unevenly. "I don't understand."

"Nor do I. But you have come here to tell me something, have you not?"

"I! Why should you think so?"

"Your face!"

"My face?" She put up her hand to her cheek, took it quickly away again. "I came this way only because I was directed. It was the nearest way to the tram line. I assure you—"

"Of course! I know. What I meant is that when you got here you made up your mind to tell me something. You called me."

"Yes, I did."

"Well then—"

"That was just an impulse, only an impulse."

"Oh." He was silent. He put up a big hand to his pipe. Oh, the terror to her of each gesture!

"But now I am here," she began, since he didn't say anything more, "can't we be friends again? We were good friends when we used to play golf together."

"Of course we were."

"But since then—" She hesitated.

"It was not my fault, you know," he said firmly, almost indeed roughly. "I consider that you broke it."

"I never meant to. I valued it—the friendship—too much."

"Then why go behind our backs and make mischief with that old man, Meyer?" Miss Vyvyan shivered under his unexpected and terrible frankness. "Since then—I tell you quite frankly—I have never been able to feel the same."

"But after—but when I came out of the *clinique*—"

His face changed suddenly, and became so almost menacing in its disgust that she stopped. "*You* never ought to have gone in there!" he said with rough earnestness.

"But—why not?" she almost stammered.

"I thought of you as far too good for that sort of thing."

"I—I too good? Oh no, indeed!"

"Well, I did. You struck me somehow as a quite exceptional woman. The very first day at the studio! When I knew you had attacked us behind our backs about that singing on the lake, I felt I was no psychologist."

Our! Us!

"And yet I do not believe I make many mistakes about people," he added, with the naïve self-assurance that was so characteristic of him. And again he fixed his steady eyes firmly upon her, searchingly. It never seemed to occur to him that she might be questioning him. And indeed just then she wasn't. She was too conscious of what she was in his eyes.

"Perhaps not," she said, in a low voice. "But don't we, most of us, see people too often in bits instead of as a whole? I think, perhaps, you've been seeing me lately in bits—bad bits."

"Anyhow the whole is made up of bits." How terribly uncompromising he was! His manner matched his eyes, his words matched both. "At the beginning I fully believed you were our friend," he said.

Again that cruel inclusion! He was forcing her to see youth from a distance. And now she looked at it from a distance. "I always wished to be your friend," she said.

"Well then, why go against us like that? But I am not sorry now. It is better, much better as it is. The break has come."

"Do you mean—between you and me?"

"You and me!" He looked sternly surprised. "No, of course not. I was speaking of old Meyer and Pauline. You tried to set him against me. And if she had been a worldly sort of girl, one of the greedy kind—and there are plenty of them—it might have made mischief between us, Pauline and me. Meyer is abominably rich as everyone knows, and he has no children they say. But Pauline has not got any greediness in her. All she wants is money enough to live while she is learning to sing as she wants to sing. Now Meyer is out of her life, so it does not matter what he feels about me, or whether he is angry or not about anything she does. One gone anyhow!"

He stopped. Now he was not looking at her. He put up his hands, pulled away the cushion from his head, threw it roughly on the wooden floor and sat more forward on the divan, looking before him with a sort of concentrated moodiness. And it was exactly in that moment—why, she could not perhaps have said with any precision—that Miss Vyvyan knew that she had never had any hold upon Carl, never, whatever she might do, whatever might be done to her by Dr. Artz or by anyone else, could have any personal hold upon him, any influence that was not connected with another. There was not even a forlorn hope. There was not any hope at all.

"And she is glad," he continued, still not looking at Miss Vyvyan. "That shows you how absolutely free from greed and worldly considerations she is. But I hear you wanted to take her to Milan." Now his eyes were on her, accusing her.

"I didn't know what to do for the best."

"That could not have been for the best."

"But she has no money."

"Marakoff has promised to train her for nothing. At Milan she would have had to pay her trainer."

"Yes."

"That is one great advantage for her here in Zurich that she would not have had in Milan—you must see that."

"But in Milan Mr. Meyer would have been willing to continue the allowance he was making to Pauline."

"Meyer is a disgusting old beast!" exclaimed Carl, violently. "And you ought to protect Pauline from him instead of wishing her to go on owing things to him. Do you mean to tell me you wish her to go on being mixed up with an old brute like Meyer?" (His young face now held a sort of almost horrified inquiry. It seemed to be saying, "Are you *that?* Is it possible that you can be *that?*") "Do you know what Meyer is?" he said, pushing a little forwards towards her on the divan.

"I know he is very musical," she said, feebly, evasively. "All the opera singers—"

"Meyer is a vile old satyr!" Carl exclaimed in a suddenly loud and violent voice, getting up from the divan as he spoke, and standing over Miss Vyvyan. "I know it. Marakoff knows it. Pauline knows it. As for Dr. Artz, Artz the magician of Zurich, he has known it from the beginning of this business of Pauline's education for opera. And do you mean to tell me that *you*—"

"Don't! Don't!" she said, holding up her hand. "I'm not a plotter, whatever I may be. When I arranged it all in London I was only thinking of helping Pauline. I have worked —really I have—I have toiled—done my very best—" Her voice failed her.

"I know you have been awfully good to Pauline in the past," he said, in a much gentler voice. "But here—"

"Here! Everything's been—been twisted all out of shape here. But when we came I had no idea—I was really a very ignorant woman, in spite of my age, till just before I came

here, even till I did come here. I didn't understand what people were up to. I didn't see much below the surface. I looked at actions and didn't understand motives."

"But now I have told you what Meyer is."

"Yes, yes. But there is no more question of his helping Pauline now. She and I—we talked about that. And it was understood. But how do you expect her to stay on here and pay for her life here?"

"She says she can."

"Did she tell you how?"

"No. But she assured me she could manage. I suppose her people will—"

"Did she say so?"

"No. But she told me not to trouble because really she would be able to manage. I know how truthful and direct she is, so I left it. The great thing was that she was staying on. Marakoff is the man for her."

Miss Vyvyan hesitated. A very strange, to her a very tremendous, change had occurred since she had come into this little room about which now darkness and a surely deepening silence were gathering. She had lost a battle which she hadn't really fought. Complete catastrophe stared her in the face. And the completeness of that catastrophe, unintentionally conveyed to her by everything Carl Fügler said, by the entire trend of their conversation dominated by him, and by his manner, emancipated her. By catastrophe she was freed. And nothing less probably could have freed her. She realized her terrible freedom. There was nothing at all to strive for. The false part of her—somehow she looked upon it as that—had received a knock-down blow from Carl Fügler. But the real part of her, always naturally vehement, seemed to require to go into action in order to save her from hopeless collapse, from a crumbling which she couldn't face. But she who all through her life had been almost recklessly impulsive was now held by caution. She was afraid of her own impulse. She no longer seemed certain of the difference between her sincerity and her insincerity. Dr. Artz had indeed twisted her all awry.

"Is not he?" said Carl Fügler, challengingly. "Cannot you see it?"

"I dare say he is." She looked away from him and again hesitated. "But I'm afraid of Dr. Artz," she said at last.

"Ah!" The exclamation came in a suddenly excited voice. And Carl threw himself down again on the divan. "Why?"

"You hate Mr. Meyer. But I think, I know, that Dr. Artz is far more dangerous."

"Dangerous to whom?"

"To Pauline."

"Go on!" The voice was violently imperative now. But again Miss Vyvyan was filled with unwonted hesitation. "I know what Artz is, but how can he be dangerous to Pauline? Marakoff and I are here."

Miss Vyvyan looked at him and there was actually a flicker of something like sarcasm in her troubled eyes. She slightly shook her head.

"Why do you do that?"

"I am not clever. I am very stupid about some things," she said. "But I believe I know Dr. Artz at last."

"Please explain. I am waiting."

"Dr. Artz is much cleverer in some ways than anybody here. I am sure of that."

"You mean that for Marakoff and me! But you do not mean to tell me that Pauline would ever have anything to do with a fellow like that!" He spoke with fiery impatience. "No, really, Miss Vyvyan, if you think that you do not know Pauline."

"Pauline isn't easy to know. She may not be a clever girl but she isn't an ordinary girl."

"I know that."

"Perhaps you think you know her."

"Yes." His sudden confident smile made her feel him as very young. She struck it from his face with this remark,

"Herr Fügler, don't be angry with me! If Pauline does manage to stay on here in Zurich it will be because Dr. Artz is paying her expenses."

Carl Fügler's rugged face became scarlet and congested under the influence of the shock of anger produced by these words. "Miss Vyvyan!" he said, with an explosion of wrath, and getting up again violently. "How can you? How can you malign your own—the girl you have professed to care for and—How can you? Oh, that is too bad!"

"But it's true. I know it's true!"

"It is not true. Pauline would never accept money from that horrid little brute. He is worse a thousand times than Meyer."

"She doesn't know it."

"I have told her how I hate him."

"Don't we often judge people by what they seem to us?"

"It is not true! I will never believe such a thing!"

"Can you listen to me for a moment?" Something in her voice and perhaps her manner seemed to make an impression upon him. He thrust his hands into his pockets, suddenly made his body tense, stood perfectly still.

"You will never make me believe that, but I will listen."

"Please do. I don't want you to think I could ever deliberately malign Pauline. I don't—I hope I could never do that. I'll just tell you what happened yesterday."

She told him, with gathering swiftness, with gradually gathering eagerness, of her visit to Dr. Artz, of his offer and of her subsequent visit to Pauline. "She had just been called by someone on the telephone when I got to the *pension*. The servant, Hedwig, told me so. I am sure, positive, it was Dr. Artz who called her. He must have gone straight to the telephone directly I left his house. I am convinced that he went there to tell her not to let me know that he had discussed the idea of paying her expenses with her."

"But how could he know you would go to the *pension?* Did you tell him?"

"No."

"Then—"

"Ah, you don't know how clever he is!"

"But this is all guessing!" said Carl Fügler impatiently.

"Will you let me tell you what happened at the *pension?* I promise not to exaggerate."

"Please go on."

"And then you can judge for yourself. I will leave it all to you. I am out of this in any case. Pauline said something to me last night which makes it quite impossible for me ever to —to—ever even try to help her personally again."

"But what did she say? Surely she could not— What was it?"

After a long silence during which Miss Vyvyan had a bitter struggle with herself she told him.

"Oh, but she could not have meant—"

"She did. She thinks all I have tried to do was because of that."

"Oh—no!" he said. And there was a sudden odd sound of tenderness in his voice. He took his right hand out of his pocket and touched her hand. "No," he repeated gently.

Miss Vyvyan's eyes were dimmed by something. She shut them, then opened them and went on. "I'll tell you the rest exactly as it happened."

He listened with profound attention. When Miss Vyvyan repeated her question about him and Pauline's reply he muttered: "She would have done better to let me do everything."

"She answered directly when I asked her if it was you. When I asked her whether it was Dr. Artz who had offered to help her she wouldn't answer."

"What did she say?"

"She refused to answer. I pressed her. She said she wouldn't speak about it. I insisted. She still refused to speak. I asked her if she could deny it. She said she denied nothing. All she wanted was to be let alone. I said I was certain that Dr. Artz had communicated with her by the telephone while I was walking from his house to the *pension.* She didn't say no. She wouldn't answer about it. Mr. Meyer told me he was certain Dr. Artz had offered to pay for Pauline."

"Meyer again!" exclaimed Carl, as if stung.

"Yes. I didn't believe it, but now I am sure of it. And Pauline has accepted, or means to accept."

"She never said so?"

"She wouldn't answer. Then she said that thing I told you about my—my—"

"I know. I remember."

"And then of course I had to go. I could only go."

Carl stood for a moment. Then he crossed to the door of the hut, opened it and went out for a moment into the little garden leaving Miss Vyvyan sitting alone. He had left his pipe, now cold, lying on the table. In the open space of the doorway there was only a pale twilight. Complete silence reigned. Presently he came back. He looked hard but calm. Coming up to her he said:

"I had a terrific row last night with that Egyptian."

"I know. He told me."

"Ah! Did he tell you why? I swept him up. He won't go near to Pauline again. Did he tell you why?"

"Yes, he did."

"Perhaps he was right—about Artz.

"He was right."

"What does Artz mean?"

"I feel sure he means to marry Pauline."

"Oh—does he?"

Carl Fügler stretched himself, lifting his strong arms and opening out his chest. "Dr. Artz!" he said. It was almost a cry. He leaned down and put a hand on Miss Vyvyan's shoulder. "*I* am going to marry Pauline!" He said it with absolute certainty. "You hear!"

Miss Vyvyan looked up at him. "I don't think she loves you."

"She does not. I know that. She does not love anyone."

"And you think you can make her love you?"

"I can make her marry me. And then—" His big hand pressed her shoulder. A faint smile showed on his big lips. "And then—!" he repeated.

That night Miss Vyvyan and he went down to Zurich in a blue tram together.

XXXIX

DR. ARTZ had so far made such a success of his life that his native self-confidence, fortified by events, had become almost overweening. It was very seldom indeed that he was troubled by doubts or assailed by fears. He had wanted three beautiful women and, ugly though he was, had obtained them all. He had got tired of them. Death had politely taken one off his hands. the law had removed the remaining two, leaving him free for further adventures. In his chosen profession he had succeeded not beyond his ambition but almost beyond his hopes. He was clever and knew it. Nevertheless there were others as clever as he was in medicine and surgery, even some who were cleverer. But he had two great advantages of which he was fully aware. He was without scruples, and he possessed an unusual power of mental domination.

This power, felt by many, was often called by his enemies hypnotic. "He hypnotizes his wretched victims and squeezes money out of them." was said by at least half the unsuccessful doctors of Switzerland. But Artz wasn't a regular hypnotist. He was a man who had trained his mind into power and learned how to exercise that power to the best advantage. His was a naturally arrogant mind and he employed it with arrogance, and with the complete ruthlessness which his innate egotism prompted him to. In addition he was a singularly excellent actor who scarcely ever showed that he was acting, and he had long ago learned the supreme virtue of patience, self-domination. Never was Artz more admirable than when he was playing a waiting game. That indeed was his specialty. Again and again he had conquered by not hurrying, by never forcing the pace.

But now he was not easy in his mind.

He had done a thing which was perhaps imprudent and which was certainly not at all characteristic of him. He had allowed another man to dictate a line of conduct to him and he had followed that line. Marakoff had been the dictator.

Meyer the ordained sacrifice. That sacrifice was now an accomplished fact. Artz had been obedient. His obedience was troubling him although it had eliminated a risk from his life. For if he had not been false to Meyer he might, perhaps—he couldn't be quite certain of it—have been forced into a contest with him on account of Pauline Iselle. He had intended to take the chance of that for the sake of Meyer's money and the fame that a success with Meyer would bring him. Somehow he would have won through if that contest had been forced upon him. No need to think any more about that. Other questions beset him bringing an amount of anxiety which he was unaccustomed to and resented.

Was he going to succeed with Marakoff? And was Meyer going to attempt any sort of revenge for the cruel trick that had been played upon him, a trick probably unexampled in the whole history of surgery?

Marakoff's relation to him at this period was very peculiar. He gave himself with abnegation to Artz, the doctor; with Artz, the man, whom he had known with a good deal of intimacy, he was reserved, suspicious, full of veiled hostility which Artz clearly perceived through the veil. Artz, the doctor, found him almost humbly anxious to follow the orders given to him, waiting on the doctor's knowledge and his skill with the anxious eagerness of a suppliant; Artz, the man apart from the doctor, found him watchful, keen, surreptitious, ever on the alert but striving to hide his alertness.

There were two duplicities in action here, matched strangely by two sincerities.

Meyer's cutting words just before he went out of the studio had left a deep impression on Marakoff. They had been spoken by an old man in a passion of course, but they had not been spoken by a fool, but by an extremely clever and worldly-wise old man. And this clever old man had told Marakoff that he, Marakoff, was playing Artz's game. "You are a boy in the hands of Artz!"

Marakoff hadn't forgotten that final sentence. It rankled in his mind because something within himself seemed to tell him

that it was a statement of truth. But now he was out on a path and he must go on. He could do nothing else. The goal was too important. His whole future was at stake. And he believed in Artz as a doctor as much as he distrusted him as a man.

The doctor's betrayal of Meyer was surely a marvelous pledge to the great artist deprived. Artz must feel certain of his ability to do what he had undertaken to do or he would never have played that horrible trick upon Meyer. The measure of his treachery to Meyer was surely also the measure of his *bona fides* towards Marakoff.

Dr. Artz had never had a better patient than the great Russian singer; and he had never taken greater pains with any patient than the pains which he took with him. But he was uneasy about the result. This was an experiment that he was making. With many of his patients he was in sight of a certainty. He knew what he could do, what he was going to do. Over and over again he had done the same thing, had restored vitality, given back lost powers, made men again capable of being lovers and women of having children.

But this was the first time he had tried to recreate a great voice. Would he be able to do it? He had his plan.

His intentions were clear in his mind. Each step in the process had been thought out. But still the great question loomed like a dark shape in the distance, carefully hidden from Marakoff, ceaselessly visible to Artz. That was one anxiety.

There was that other connected with Meyer which really troubled him less, but still troubled him. And he had a third anxiety. This was centered upon Pauline.

Artz had very little confidence in the stability of young girls. Promises made by them were not accepted by his cynicism as guarantees of good faith. Sometimes indeed he required them, but only as a *pis aller*. It was occasionally better to have a promise than not. There was at least the chance of its being kept, and if so something was gained. But to feel safe because of a young girl's promise was, in his view, little less than a madman's sensation. And Carl Fügler was in Zurich.

Although he knew how to be such a marvelously patient man

on occasion Dr. Artz couldn't get rid of the feeling that he had better not be slow any longer in the matter of Pauline Iselle. He had been very patient about the girl. Never surely had he played a part better than since he had first met her in London and had decided that presently she should belong to him, should fill the vacant place in the big house at the corner of Kreuzstrasse. But now something—his sixth sense perhaps—warned him that it was time to act strongly. A longer patience would be dangerous, might be disastrous. Carl Fügler was in Zurich, very much alive.

Dr. Artz of course knew how Carl Fügler hated him, but he didn't really hate Carl Fügler. There was something in Carl that Artz respected, a force, a fearlessness, a sort of savage sincerity which had made a strong impression on Artz. Oddly perhaps Artz's extremely clever hypocrisy was got at by Fügler's sincerity. Artz won his way by underground methods and had always believed in them, partly because they were natural to him, partly because of the almost continuous success which he attained by means of them. But since he had known Carl Fügler better something told him there was perhaps another method of attaining success, the brutally sincere and frankly forcible method, which was Carl Fügler's.

Just lately, perhaps morbidly influenced by his other anxieties, he had begun to feel seriously anxious about Fügler in connection with Pauline Iselle. He knew that Fügler was in love with her, And he knew—or at any rate felt certain—that Pauline was not in love with Fügler. Artz had a sure instinct with women. Pauline he saw as a pupil, not as a lover. She was probably more concentrated on Marakoff than on anyone else. In the flesh she was unawakened although she was twenty-one. Her spirit was set on singing. How all that tempted Artz!

But he divined in Carl Fügler a conquering something, and in Pauline he divined a something that was slavish. The one might come into action and elicit the other if a determining moment arrived. Now he seemed mentally to scent that determining moment.

It would come, he believed, if Carl Fügler got to know of his

offer to pay Pauline Iselle's expenses in Zurich. Pauline hadn't definitely accepted that offer yet. But he was certain she would accept because she was so wrapped up in her singing career, so entirely the child of ambition. And he had been so clever with her that she wasn't afraid of him now. How much cleverer he had been than old Meyer, how much cleverer than that Egyptian fool, Khalil Ibrahim! Yes, that would be all right. He would quite easily now arrange with Pauline that little matter of the expenses. But if she didn't keep her promise? If Carl Fügler came to know that she was in his, Artz's hands in a money affair? That was what Artz was afraid of now. That was his third anxiety.

He didn't know that already in the hut on the Zurichberg the secret was out through the little English lady who had come to his house for *piqûres*. His anxiety didn't connect itself with Miss Vyvyan. He felt sure that if Pauline broke her promise she wouldn't break it with a woman but with a man. He had not seen Pauline since his telephone message to her. But now he decided that he must see her. He had been passive for a very long time. His patience had been extraordinary. But his instinct told him that perhaps he was waiting too long. Meyer might make a move. Fügler was his enemy. Marakoff, too, was no longer as he had been. As a patient he was almost pitifully subservient, as a friend he had lost all ease in their intercourse. He was secretly suspicious, perhaps hostile. But Marakoff was not dangerous. If he attempted to interfere with any plan of Artz the weapon was there handy. Not that a weapon was necessary. A threat would suffice.

"I'm afraid then that I shall have to give up my attempt to bring back your voice."

Marakoff then was negligible. As to Miss Vyvyan, Artz looked upon her as a somewhat grotesque victim fitted out to minister to his sense of humor. For she was of course desperately in love with Carl Fügler, and so must of necessity be Pauline's enemy. Her new vitality, her spurious sense of youth, must have rendered her hopeful, and as long as she was hopeful she couldn't be dangerous.

Besides of course she suspected nothing. That had been his cleverest move so far, that suggestion to help Pauline through Miss Vyvyan. But even if she did suspect she would surely do nothing to prevent Pauline from being drawn away forever out of reach of Carl Fügler.

Dr. Artz's infallible instinct told him that Carl Fügler was the danger point. He mustn't waste time. He must now go ahead boldly. The first thing to be done was definitely to arrange the money matter with Pauline. Till that was done she was not in his hands. Once it was done she would be in a new relation towards him.

Artz telephoned to Pauline. He wanted to ask her to his house. But his sense of caution prevailed over his natural impulse. He asked her to meet him in the most public place he could think of. He asked her to come to tea with him at Huguenin's "to settle that little matter of the money." He was slightly surprised when she at once accepted. He would have been less surprised if he had known that she had just received a note from Meyer telling her that unless she consented to leave Zurich at once for Milan her allowance was stopped.

"I am already in communication with the bank about the matter," was the last sentence in the letter.

A chasseur from the Baur-au-Lac waited for an answer. Pauline wrote it with a trembling hand, her cheeks flushed with anger.

Dear Mr. Meyer,

I am staying on here. I thank you again for what you have done for me but neither here, nor anywhere else, could I accept anything more from you.

Believe me

Yrs. Faithfully

PAULINE ISELLE

She gave this note to the chasseur. A little later Dr. Artz's telephone message came. She answered it and went to put on her hat. She had resolved to accept his offer. In doing this she knew

that she would run counter to the warnings of Miss Vyvyan, and that she would outrage the feelings of Carl Fügler if he ever learned of her action. That could not be helped now. She must think of her future, of her singing, not of the feelings of others. Her belief in Marakoff was unquestioning. She was certain that at this stage in her pupil's career a change of master would be fatal. All that had been done would be undone. She would have to start all over again. Besides where would the money come from? If she left Zurich now she would have to go back to London. All chance of a career would be at an end. She would have to subside into lodgings with daddy. There would be no outlook for her. It was a question of taking this extra help which was offered to her, joining it to the help she had already accepted from Marakoff, or literally of abandoning all prospects of a career.

She did not hesitate any longer. She would close with Dr. Artz. Marakoff and he were both of them old enough to have had her for a child. She would pay them both back with the first money she earned. And—she must sing. Nothing mattered but that. Nothing counted but that. All this that had happened had only made her obsession more voluminous. It was like a cloudy garment enfolding her.

She felt herself to be purely singer as she hastened towards Bahnhofstrasse and Huguenin's. She had no fears, no suspicions about Dr. Artz, in spite of her interview with Miss Vyvyan in the *pension,* in spite of Carl Fügler's frequently expressed hatred of the doctor. Dr. Artz was, as everyone in Zurich knew, not only a lover of music but also a musician. He was going to help her because he believed in her voice. He had never shown the least interest in her as a human being apart from her gift of song. He had never asked her into his house though, as he was in her view quite old, there would have been nothing extraordinary in his doing so. Even now, when they were going to have an important business interview, he fixed as the place of meeting Huguenin's, the smartest and most crowded tea-room in Zurich. This fact alone would have given her complete confidence that day.

Dr. Artz was quite aware of that. For that reason he had fixed upon Huguenin's.

When Pauline reached Huguenin's Dr. Artz was standing in front of the entrance, unusually puffy in a large fur coat and wearing a big black hat. He looked serious, kindly, and, Pauline thought, quite an old man. Carl Fügler—ah! he did look young! But Dr. Artz—no! She could not quite understand all the fuss that was made about Dr. Artz. Miss Vyvyan looked feverish when she spoke of him. Carl Fügler looked savage. Even for dear big Monsieur Marakoff Dr. Artz seemed to have a very special and almost mysterious meaning. Pauline found in him a grave, courteous and kindly sympathetic person, very fond of music and evidently a believer in the future of her voice, one who wanted to help forward that voice. And then he was so very ugly. That fact, though she didn't know it, had helped to create in her her present feeling of confidence in Artz. How different he was from the terrible Mr. Meyer!

"I have taken a table, Miss Iselle, where we can talk quietly. It is in a far corner. Come in, please." His hand-clasp was slight. No meaning in it. And *he* didn't take her by the elbow.

She walked in followed by Artz. There were many people in the big tea-room. "Which way, please?" she said, turning in her quiet, unselfconscious way. She had much more poise now than when she had first come to Zurich.

"I will show you."

He led the way to a table in a corner far away from the entrance. There were two comfortable chairs by it, and on it among tea things and marvelous cakes was a long strip of cardboard showing the word *"Réservé."*

"This is it." Artz took off his coat and gave it to a boy with his hat, gloves and cane. Pauline opened her dark blue coat. A smart girl brought them tea and hot muffins. Artz carefully and gravely helped Pauline and himself. While he did this he didn't say a word. He looked grave and detached, preoccupied nevertheless with her well-being. She must be properly supplied. His manner and look made her feel that he regarded her as a child whose tea was of great importance.

"Is it two lumps?"

"Yes, please."

"Then that is right. I take three. I am very fond of sweet things." There was something greedy in Dr. Artz. She noticed that as he attacked his first muffin. What was there in him to set people in such a ferment?

"Well now, Miss Iselle," he said at last. "We must not forget our little matter of business." Pauline flushed slightly, but he was not looking at her and the flush grew no deeper. "You will let me share with Monsieur Marakoff in helping you forward for a little while, won't you?"

"I think it's terribly kind of you."

"It is the kindness then of one who loves music for one whom he believes in as a future singer of value," Artz said, gravely. "If your career is cut short at this point I consider that it will be shattered."

"Oh yes, I know it will!" Pauline exclaimed, faced at that moment with a terrible vision of lodgings in London with daddy lounging over a disordered breakfast table and mother reading the Daily Mirror in an old dressing-gown.

"And Mr. Meyer, I understand, means to withdraw his help."

"He has withdrawn it."

"Already?"

"Yes."

"Then there is no time to be lost. You and I must settle matters at once." He helped himself to another muffin and set his teeth in it eagerly. The hot butter dripped down to his plate. He stretched out a hand and dropped another lump of sugar into his tea. "We must go into business. Tell me, please, what the weekly allowance was—apart from the lessons."

Pauline told him. She felt slightly uncomfortable, but because of his very impersonal manner less uncomfortable than she had expected to feel.

Artz repeated the sum. "That is nothing very tremendous. I will be responsible for that until Marakoff has finished with you and you have found your feet as a public singer."

"Oh—you are kind!" said Pauline. She really did feel a flood of gratitude and relief flow all through her.

"The best way will be if I give it to you personally in paper money each week. If I opened a bank account in your name people might talk. They are always so silly and malicious. They understand nothing either of motives or actions. Could you come up to my house and get it once a week? I would leave it in a sealed envelop for you with a servant I can thoroughly trust."

"Oh, thank you. Yes, I would come." She was thinking with secret ecstasy of her singing. Now all was right. Now she could go ahead. The pathway was clear in front of her.

"As to conditions," said Dr. Artz, handing the muffin dish to Pauline carefully, "there is only one. And it won't be new to you. Nobody must know anything about this. I have many enemies here. Many people misunderstand me and attribute to my most simple actions all sorts of under meanings. I am looked upon by some—fools—as a mystery man, when I am really nothing but a doctor who knows, perhaps, more than most of the doctors here, and who, at any rate, has greater success than they have. I have suffered a good deal from evil tongues, and so I prefer what I do, not to be discussed. Therefore I know you will keep your promise not to speak about this."

"But you did speak about it to Miss Vyvyan, didn't you?" said Pauline, with great simplicity.

"I! But you did not, did you?" said Dr. Artz, with a change of tone. "I mean you had not told her that we had spoken about this matter before I mentioned it to her that night?"

"Oh no! But I am sure that she knows now."

Dr. Artz leaned forward. His chest loomed above the tea table. His small black eyes became piercing. "How can that be as you did not tell her?"

Pauline explained what had happened at the *pension* between her and Miss Vyvyan, after the latter's night visit to Dr. Artz. She did not of course give the whole conversation. She merely said that Miss Vyvyan had again and again asked her who would pay for her if she stayed on in Zurich, and that when

she had tried to avoid answering, Miss Vyvyan had accused her of not being "straight," and had finally demanded to know whether Dr. Artz had offered to pay her expenses.

"Did not you deny that?" exclaimed Dr. Artz, in a low urgent voice.

"How could I deny it?" said Pauline.

"But—"

"I didn't say that anyone had offered to pay for me. I refused to answer questions about my life."

"You refused to answer!" said Dr. Artz. The sound of his voice as he said that was so peculiar that it startled Pauline.

"I didn't know what else to do," she said. "I couldn't tell her."

"But you have told her!" exclaimed Dr. Artz. As he spoke he shut his eyes and leaned back in his chair. This action—the shutting his eyes—frightened Pauline. Why did he do it? Why did he keep them shut for a minute or more? When he opened them they were smiling eyes. "So she cross-examined you, did she?" he asked, in a quiet voice.

"Yes. And she knew I had been called to the telephone just before she came."

"How did she know that?" said Dr. Artz, again leaning forward, and letting the smile go out of his eyes.

"Hedwig, the maid, told her."

Dr. Artz muttered something under his breath in Swiss German. "Did she ask you who had called you on the telephone?" he said.

"She said she was sure it was you." Dr. Artz sat looking at her in silence. "I didn't tell her who it was."

"There was no need," said Dr. Artz. He sat perfectly still for a moment still pushed forward against the table with his queer bust presented as it were to Pauline, like the bust of a figurehead on the prow of one of those obsolete old sailing ships that used to confront the seas. He seemed plunged in profound thought. When he spoke at last he said: "Now you must have some cakes. Which are you going to choose? I like specially these, made with coconut and frosted cherries."

"Oh, I don't think—"

"But you must! I am going to eat several cakes and I cannot eat alone."

Pauline took a cake, at haphazard, quickly. Then Dr. Artz took one and began to eat it with noticeable relish.

"Delicious!" he said. "These are perfect." And the smile had come back to his eyes. "You wonder perhaps why I was so anxious that Miss Vyvyan should not know?" he said, after a pause.

"Yes—a little."

"And why I cannot help regretting that now she does know. For she does! Yes! It is because she is unfortunately a terribly jealous and despotic little woman who *needs"*—he laid a heavy emphasis on the word—"someone to govern, or as you English say to boss. She chose you long ago as her victim—ah! She does not want you to escape. In her we, you and I, now have an enemy." He said the last sentence with almost ponderous gravity, then helped himself to another cake.

"Oh, but I can't think that—" began Pauline.

"You are too young to understand these things," Dr. Artz interrupted quietly. "Rather than that you should owe your career to Marakoff and me, Miss Vyvyan would break it."

"But it was she who got Mr. Meyer to help me."

"Had you begun to show independence then?" said Dr. Artz. He shook his fine head. "No! But out here you began to change, to develop. Out here you began to get away from Miss Vyvyan. Oh, I have seen it all coming on."

"But then why did you offer to let her administer the money you are so kind as to give me?"

"Oh—that! Because after seeing her that night I was afraid lest otherwise she might snatch you away from your career altogether. I did not then know that you would dare to stand out against her wishes, her opposition. She had seemed to go out of your life. I realized that she was going back into it."

"I am old enough to know what I want," said Pauline, with an assumption of youthful firmness.

"But will she let you do it?" he said challengingly.

"How can she prevent me?"

Artz shrugged his big disproportionate shoulders. "She might —for instance—fetch your father out here."

"Oh, I don't think daddy—"

"She might alarm him—about me. And then there is Meyer."

"But I have nothing more to do with him."

"That's just it!" said Artz, somberly. "And then—there are other enemies of mine here!" Something in his manner even more than in his words bred fear in Pauline.

"Enemies! But they have nothing to do with me!"

"Are you so sure?" he said, turning his eyes upon her for an instant, then looking away. "Your career! I am thinking of your career! I want it to be free—from all obstacles."

"Oh—yes!" said Pauline, in an urgent breath. Her silver-gray eyes were beginning to shine.

"We must make it free!" said Artz. "No more cakes?"

"Oh no—I couldn't."

"Then let us go, and as we walk we will see, we will plan. How I wish *she* did not know!" He lifted a hand and beckoned to the chasseur, who at once came with his fur coat, hat and stick. He paid the bill. Pauline fastened her little coatee. Then Dr. Artz, standing up, turned to allow the chasseur to help him into his heavy coat. As he was doing this Pauline noticed that his face suddenly changed. She had never seen Dr. Artz look thoroughly startled. Now he looked startled. He seemed to her to stare for an instant at something in the distance of the large and crowded tea-room as if astonished and not pleasantly. But even as she was wondering his expression changed to grave kindliness.

"Let us go," he said. "This is the best way." With a gesture he made her go in front of him to the right, quite away to the right. Then as they made towards the entrance he kept beside her on the left, walking exactly level with her till they were at the door.

He had seen Miss Vyvyan and Carl Fügler in earnest conversation at the far side of the room on the left. And as he was fastening his fur coat they had both seen him. More! They

had both looked at him not with the expression of two people saluting a friend but with the expression of two people intensely observing an enemy.

XL

DR. ARTZ hated having to hurry. He disbelieved in haste. All his successes had been obtained deliberately. He feared haste; he distrusted it. He was the type of man who plans carefully, takes as few chances as possible, works out details with subtle ingenuity, and arrives at a foreseen end without turning a hair.

Therefore that winter evening, as he stepped into Bahnhofstrasse with Pauline Iselle, he was greatly disturbed in mind. Although he had only looked at Carl Fügler and Miss Vyvyan for an instant across a crowded room he had gathered an extraordinary fact which must, he knew, completely change a procedure he had mapped out in his mind and had intended to carry out with the finished subtlety he delighted in. The fact was this—that Miss Vyvyan and Carl Fügler had come together again, as adherents. Formerly they had seemed, perhaps, to be friends but in reality had never been friends. For when a woman is madly in love with a man who has no thought of love for her, friendship is out of the question. Then a desperate jealousy had taken all ease from their relation. Then one of them had become secretly the pursuer. And now, suddenly, Artz saw them as adherents, banded together against himself.

The thing seemed impossible. But it simply was so. He knew how to read a glance. He could not be mistaken. Something—what he couldn't conceive—had happened, and Miss Vyvyan had betrayed his, Dr. Artz's, medical treatment. It had suddenly all gone for nothing. She was Carl Fügler's friend, his adherent, ready to fight with him in defense of Pauline Iselle. Then she must have slain her jealousy. She must have flung back to the woman she had been when Artz had first

met her at Lady Braybridge's house in England. How had it happened? Who had brought it about?'

He couldn't conceive. He was utterly at a loss. But he had seen and he knew that Carl Fügler had got Miss Vyvyan on his side in the fight for Pauline Iselle.

For Artz now knew that it was just that, a fight between age and youth, between himself and Carl Fügler.

This discovery, Artz realized instantaneously, necessitated a drastic alteration in all his plans. He had intended to win Pauline gradually as he had won the other beautiful women whom he had married. He had got rid of them bruskly enough, But the winning—that had been full of finesse. He had established his power over them by most subtle degrees. And so he had intended to establish it over Pauline. The money arrangement between them was to have been only the merest preliminary, the basis on which he intended to found a delightful relation, almost paternal at first, charmingly musical, then developing by carefully planned stages into something more possessive. He would engineer—as he well knew how—a crescendo of influence over the young and inexperienced girl until he had obtained over her one of those strange and inexplicable mental dominations which are as irresistible as the physical power of a body over a weaker body. This he had already done three times with three different girls. He had not the slightest doubt of being able to do it again with Pauline Iselle.

But now this plan was made impossible. Hurtling violent youth was hammering at the door, ready to break in like a thief if the door wasn't answered. And by the side of youth was ranged incomprehensibly the small English lady who had had the *piqûres*. Artz had seen in their eyes an eager hostility which meant more, far more, than feeling. It meant action.

"Your career—your career!" he said, out in Bahnhofstrasse. He turned his big head towards the girl at his side. "I may have seemed indifferent to you," he went on, "You may have thought I was uninterested. Miss Vyvyan, Marakoff, that excitable boy who, like a big bear cub, does not know yet what he wants—they have all seemed far more interested in your

career than I have. But, Miss Iselle"—he spoke now with grave impressiveness—"in musical matters I am very competent. I can judge. And from the day when I heard you sing for the first time in Carlton House Terrace I knew that with your voice and, if I may say so, your appearance, you, given the chance, were destined to become a unique operatic soprano, not of the dramatic but of the lyric order, perhaps a coloratura singer of the first rank."

"Oh, Dr. Artz—do you really think so?"

"My dear child, I know it. But all this depends on how your life is ordered, what influences surround you. Have you ever thought seriously about influences?"

She gazed at him in the dark street full of noises, of the clanging of passing trams, of the hooting of motors, of the chatter of voices and the hard tapping of hastening feet upon pavement. "I don't know that I have."

"I mean influences that affect the artist temperament, which of course you possess. It is so terribly important what influences the artist temperament is brought into contact with. This is because the artist takes influences so readily and absorbs them so deeply, good and evil alike. It was not my business, but I have often thought about, and feared for, you."

"But I thought you took no interest in my career."

"I do not always show what is going on in my mind. And you were surrounded. It was not for me to interfere. I would not have done so now if I had not seen that you were in a terrible difficulty, if I had not realized the tremendous importance to you of what happens now. You are literally at a crisis in your career, and those around you, instead of thinking of what is necessary to *you,* are swayed by evil passion, like Meyer, or by all sorts of extraneous matters like Miss Vyvyan. It was almost criminal of her to think of forcing you away from here to start again at Milan, or perhaps to eat out your heart in London. For she was even ready to make you return to London— Ach!" He gave vent to a deep sigh. "These people, Meyer, Miss Vyvyan"—he paused, as if about to add another name to those two, but did not—"they are all wrong for you now. You need

uplifting influences. Above all you need a sense of freedom, release, *peace* in which to develop at will untrammeled."

"Oh yes, Dr. Artz! That is exactly it. That is what I feel all the time!"

"And all these people, instead of thinking of *you,* they are thinking of themselves in connection with you."

"Yes, yes! Really they do! My singing and my voice—that doesn't come first as it ought to."

"Of course it ought! Of course it simply must if you are to do any good. Well, at any rate now the money question is settled and that is something gained."

They came to the end of Bahnhofstrasse. Artz turned to go to the left where, on the further side of the road, is the tree-shaded *place* in which on summer evenings a band sometimes plays, but which now was dark and deserted.

"Take care in crossing!" he said. "Look out for the tram!" Very gently and naturally he took Pauline's arm, as if to protect her from the traffic. How different his way of taking it was from Meyer's!

Directly they were on the other side he took his hand away. Pauline did not notice that a strong flush of red had come to his ugly face.

They walked in the dark towards the Limmat and came to the Quaibrücke. Artz went on talking about Pauline's career, what was necessary for it, how it ought to be guarded, in what direction she ought to develop, what influences she needed, what she would certainly come to—if!

Always there was present evidently in his mind and therefore in his conversation that *if*. It loomed large. It stuck out of the conversation like an enormous word heads upon heads taller than all its fellows. It became threatening. It threatened Pauline. There was doom in it. Like a weapon it might surely strike her down. And yet it might save her from disaster eternal. If this is *not* done! If this *is* done! The gaping difference between those two!

She hung upon Dr. Artz's words. At that moment she was utterly fascinated by him, she almost, in a girlish unfledged way,

loved him. Here was someone who knew, someone who, detached, able to consider her and her career without personal prejudice or personal desires, was thinking only of it in a beautiful naked sort of way. Eagerly she absorbed his words. She turned her fair head and gazed at him as they walked. She forgot his age. Or perhaps she rested on it unconsciously. She forgot entirely how ugly she thought him. His glorious musicalness and power of pure thought, directed on her, her career, her future, completely possessed her. She forgot everything else.

They crossed the bridge and walked on. She didn't notice where they were going.

"Music is one of the most onerous careers there is, Miss Iselle, though the average person who attends concerts and opera performances doesn't believe so. Because people go to hear music in order to receive pleasure in their moments of relaxation they have the ridiculous idea that performers have quite an easy time of it. I have heard people say of Battistini, who used sometimes to be a guest of our opera here, 'Oh, he sings by nature. Singing has never been any trouble to him.' The same rubbish has been said of many great artists. But to become a world-singer requires infinite devotion, self-sacrifice, patience and endless perseverance. Will and character—these are the great requisites. Somehow I feel you have both. But you need protection. Already, young as you are, unknown as you are, people are beginning to try to hang on to you, to attach their lives to yours without reason. We have seen that here. It was even so in London. Miss Vyvyan was there clinging on to you, trying to force you into her mold."

He continued talking in this strain with soft and penetrating energy, even with seductiveness. For Artz knew very well how to suit himself to his company when he wished to do so, and if he had not the body he had the brain of a charmer. He wrapped Pauline round in the most delicate flattery, which was so carefully indirect that she did not recognize it as flattery. Dr. Artz even seemed to her blunt, as if, being a sincere man, he had to come out with the truth. But his truth, or what she took for truth, betrayed his belief in her, in her future, if—

Her whole soul seemed to be filled up with this "if" when she noticed a long iron fence, a tall wrought-iron gate, a terrace, the darkness of a garden, two lighted lamps, and realized that this was not her street, that they had been walking up-hill, that they were away from her quarter of the town.

And Dr. Artz was still talking. He stopped in front of the gate but he was so absorbed in his subject that he continued talking for several minutes. "Oh, it is important what happens now, how things go for you. It is vitally important. I feel that you are at the turning point of your career. There has been too much fuss here in Zurich, a great deal of dust about nothing. And then this question of money. How it has hampered you! Meyer and the money! And then Miss Vyvyan, all the trouble about her! And that foolish and tiresome Egyptian boy! And—" He checked himself abruptly.

After an instant of deep silence he added, in a low, very earnest voice: "The lark can only spread its wings and soar in the wide spaces if it is set free. When we would hear it singing we must hear it in the blue. It comes to us then as a voice, an airy voice. To me it is as the very voice of liberty. Yes! But liberty to the human being is after all relative." He turned his small luminous eyes upon her.

"The liberty *you* need is absolute liberty from all money anxieties and obligations. Not the liberty of loneliness in poverty, but the relative liberty of—of—Ach!" He uttered a deep sighing ejaculation. He seemed to be deeply moved. But suddenly his face changed and he exclaimed, "What have I done? Brought you up here instead of—" His surprise was obvious. He seemed even startled. "We are mechanism!" he said. "My mind was on your future and my abominable old legs brought me here without my knowing it. Why did you not stop me?"

"I didn't know either!" said Pauline, with simplicity.

"Well, now we must— Oh, but wait! As we are here let us settle that little business. Come in for a moment, and allow me to hand you the first month's money. Then for a month you need not bother to come up here or to think of these tiresome things."

He pushed the tall iron gate, held it open. Pauline had flushed again but she passed in, after a slight hesitation, but a murmur of, "Oh, thank you. You are kind!"

She felt embarrassed. She would have preferred to call for the sealed envelop and receive it from Heinrich. But what excuse to make? And since he was so kind!

Dr. Artz opened the big door with his key and she passed into the house.

XLI

"YOU saw! You saw! Now then what are we going to do?"

Carl Fügler spoke in a hot excited voice which nevertheless he kept low because of the people around him. He half got up as he spoke, then, as if governed by a second thought correcting his impulse, sank back in his seat. "Where have they gone?"

"He must be taking her home," said Miss Vyvyan.

"Wait now! We will give them a certain time—" Carl pulled out a large silver watch. "How long does it take to reach the *pension* on foot, do you think? I say about twenty minutes."

"Yes."

"We will give them that. And then we will follow them. And then— Have some more coffee!" He poured coffee out of a pot that was in front of him, put in hot milk, and pushed the cup over to Miss Vyvyan. "It is no use being too hasty. I feel that," he added. "That is why I have let two days go without doing anything. I haven't seen her since you came to the hut. It is so important. I have been trying to think things out. The crux is her indifference. I have been honest with myself and I have come down to that. Her indifference and her tremendous quiet ambition—they play into the beast's hands. Do you know there was a horrible moment once when I even thought it possible that because Meyer was the means of enabling her to study for opera she might—she might—"

Miss Vyvyan made a movement of her head. Her eyes looked guilty.

"Women have done that, lots of women, future opera singers," Carl affirmed.

"Don't let us think of horrors like that."

"Anyhow I was wrong there. But I do believe she may have hesitated once."

"Standing even on the brink isn't going over," Miss Vyvyan said, so strangely that he was startled. He stared at her in his formidable way, as if he were probing her and then summing up the results of his investigation. "Our impulses are often terribly contradictory," she murmured, facing his steady eyes bravely.

A much softer look came into his face. "You will help me —now?" he said.

"Yes. I want to help. But what can I do? Pauline is not governed by women. I don't think she is really susceptible to any woman's influence, certainly not to mine. After what she said—"

"Help me with a bit of advice."

"I'll try."

"You are afraid of Artz, are you not?"

"Not for myself any more," she said, with a sort of fierce sincerity, as if she were constraining herself to pluck. "But I know he is very dangerous."

"Do you really believe he could ever get Pauline to consent to marry him?"

"I believe he might."

"I cannot comprehend—" Carl began ferociously, with a sort of indignant contempt.

She touched his sleeve. He looked round and realized people.

"Three women, almost girls, already!" she said.

"It is incomprehensible!"

"If she loved someone else it would all be different. But as she only loves her singing so far!"

"That is the cause of it all! There is only one thing for it that I can see. I must make her marry me at once. Then she will be safe."

Miss Vyvyan looked at him with eyes that were full of an intimate tragedy which he did not see. "Yes, she would be quite safe then."

"Then you think, too, that is the only way?"

"Why do you ask me? Why have you taken to asking me things? You used to be always so sure of yourself."

"It is because—" He pulled up. "You ought to know why," he finished. And the red mounted in his brown cheeks.

"I suppose—perhaps I do."

"What a conversation for Huguenin's!" he said, with a sort of savage impatience. Again he pulled out the silver watch. "Let us go! Oh—you have not finished your coffee!"

"That doesn't matter."

"I cannot stand being crowded in with all these maniacs."

"Maniacs!"

"They look like maniacs to me. Besides it is so infernally hot. Fraülein!" With a big hand he summoned a waitress imperiously, paid the bill, and started to thrust his way out. Miss Vyvyan followed him.

All this was rather like a nightmare to her, but she held bravely on to her heroic self, the self that she had always possessed, that she had secretly gloried in long ago, and had forced herself back to. Yes, she had forced her way and now hung on desperately. She was in the mood which carried the first soldier over the fortress wall into the midst of the enemy.

They were just coming to the door when it swung slowly, pushed from the outside, and an old man and old woman walked in, the old woman first. She turned a pair of dark eyes, glittering with intelligence beneath snow-white hair, on Miss Vyvyan.

"Miss Anna!" Miss Vyvyan exclaimed.

"Yes, here I am! Come to see what my ancient brother is up to. Zurich is not the best place for him in the winter. Nor is London. But there at least he has his comfortable house and me to take care of him."

Meyer, wrapped to the chin in a sable-lined coat and leaning on an umbrella, let a pair of despairing and venomous eyes rest

on Miss Vyvyan for a moment, then gazed at Carl Fügler. How terribly old he looked, almost incredibly old! He seemed suddenly to have crashed from a height into a gulf of old age. But his eyes were still vital, still showed a certain energy of mind.

"Yes," he said, with a slight bow to Fügler. "I am leaving here. I am going to London."

"Soon?" said Miss Vyvyan.

"Almost immediately." He sighed, as if he simply couldn't help it, and his meager shoulders drooped under the heavy coat.

"I have had a note from her," he added, speaking to Miss Vyvyan, speaking with a husky coldness and with the manner of a man too far gone in dejection and physical feebleness to care for any opinion. "She refuses. She refuses everything. No gratitude! No thought for what has been done! But that is how the world is. Everyone who possesses any money soon finds that out."

"Come, Leo! We are in everyone's way here. I want to see you before I go, Miss Vyvyan. I hear you are at the Eden."

"Yes."

"May I find you there this evening?"

Miss Vyvyan hesitated.

"You won't be in?"

"Yes—perhaps a little late."

"Let me come in the motor for half an hour after dinner."

"Yes. I'll be in then. Good-by."

"Good-by."

She turned to say good-by to Meyer.

"Artz shall suffer for this yet," he murmured hoarsely. "I shall not let this rest."

His eyes flamed. As he walked slowly past Carl Fügler he cast a terrible look on him, terrible because there was in it a scorching flame of despairing envy. They both heard him cough as he followed his old sister towards an empty table. "That is the oldest man in the world!" said Carl Fügler when Miss Vyvyan and he were out in Bahnhofstrasse. "How hellishly awful to be old—like that! What eyes he has! If anything could make me ashamed of being young I believe those eyes of his would. I

do not hate Meyer any more. Who could? But what an irony his expecting *her* to be grateful!"

"Yes. Life is full of irony."

"You are not meant to feel that." He cast a very gentle glance on her. "You are what the English call a good sort," he said.

"That's—that's a rather dull thing to be, I think. Still I suppose it is better than nothing."

"Surely! You will always have friends."

The incomprehension of youth! But she did not tell him of it. Instead she twisted her small face into a smile and said, "I hope so."

The unexpected meeting with Miss Anna and her brother had taken them away for a moment from their concentration on two other figures of Zurich, but now, after walking along down the crowded lit-up street for a moment and staring ahead, Carl Fügler exclaimed:

"I never have difficulty in making up my mind. But this evening I cannot decide what to do. It is so terribly important what I do, or we do. In a few moments we shall be at the *pension*. We shall see her. And then—what to do!"

"You really want me to come in with you? What can I do? I have done all I can to protect Pauline from Dr. Artz. The last time I saw her I begged her to tell me if it was he who was going to pay for her. She wouldn't."

"But we know it is he."

"Yes, of course—now. I will do anything I can. But I don't know what could be of any use. Pauline thinks me a meddlesome, tyrannical woman on the lookout for a victim."

"Oh no!"

"She does. And—and perhaps I have been that, I don't know."

"I shall always stand up for you with Pauline," Carl said warmly.

"She has formed her own opinion of me. And perhaps she is right. What do you think I can do—could do?"

"You can help me to prove to her how impossible it is for her to accept money from Artz."

"Then she will think I want to take her away—back to London."

"You can do this then!" he spoke eagerly, urging, "you can tell her you will find the money for her living expenses as long as she stays with Marakoff."

"But I don't know how I can. I would. I would gladly. I might try, perhaps—give some concerts—something. But it would take time."

"No, no! Of course I will get the money, and hand it on to you."

"But can you afford it?"

"Yes!" he exclaimed, with force. "Of course I can—easily." They walked on side by side in silence. They came on to the Quaibrücke. Miss Vyvyan still was encompassed by the feeling of nightmare. She felt herself to be a helpless thing drifting in darkness, or blown through darkness. Beside her was all that was, or could ever be, necessary for her protection and happiness. But it was not functioning. In her nightmare dream it was as a powerful and glorious machine malignly withheld from action by a superior demon.

The winter cold pierced her as cold had never pierced her before. And Carl Fügler was asking her to help him! His tremendous self-assurance was shaken. She knew why. Love had betrayed it. Perhaps only for the moment. She could not tell. But how was she to help?

Carl Fügler began to walk very fast. Active and thin though she was, she could scarcely keep up with him. "'Perhaps you had better go in first and see her alone," he threw at her from the height.

"But after what she has said to me!"

"A child like that! I know she is really very fond of you."

"Oh no!"

"Yes, she is. She admires you tremendously, too. Only of course—" But Carl didn't finish the sentence. "The fact is she gets mad if anyone tries to interfere with her singing," he said, rather awkwardly.

"But I didn't do that."

"I mean there was the question of money."

"But so there is now." They were quite near to the *pension*. He stopped. He was looking unusually agitated. "Miss Vyvyan, it seems to me there is only one thing to be done. Tell her you have found the money for her life here. I will manage it, but of course until things are settled between us she may never know the money comes from me. Just say you have found it, that it is all right, that she has nothing more to trouble about. She cannot resent your going to her with such news as that. Will you do it?"

"Do you mean now?"

"Yes, now. I will wait outside for you and hear the result.

"But if she asks for an explanation. If she—"

"Oh, never mind all that! The thing is to break the connection with Artz, at once and finally. Will you do it? Will you help me?"

"Very well. Yes."

He put out a hand and gave her hand a squeeze that hurt her. Then they walked on rapidly.

When they got to the *pension* he said: "I will wait here. You will find me here. Tell her you have already found the money. You have managed it all since you last saw her. Say it is yours."

"No, really I couldn't do that."

"Do not say anything about where it comes from then. It is good of you to help me."

As she went into the big building, she saw him hastily lighting a cigarette.

When she had gone in Carl walked up and down in the darkness smoking feverishly. He did not taste the cigarette. Smoking was something to do. The hint at least of an occupation in it. No doubt Miss Vyvyan would be with Pauline for some time, perhaps for a long time. Just as he was trying to make up his mind to patience, she came out and faced him.

"But—"

"She isn't there. She hasn't come back."

Carl Fügler stared, then thrust a hand inside his overcoat

and pulled out his watch. "We gave them time, plenty of time. Where can they be?"

"I don't know."

Carl was staring at her. Now he looked again at his watch. "A quarter of an hour!" he muttered.

"What?"

"We will give them a quarter of an hour, and then if they are not back—"

"Yes?"

"There is only one thing to be done. I shall go to Artz's house." Miss Vyvyan didn't say anything. He put back the watch, bent and took hold of her wrist with a hard grip. "Do you think she is there?" he asked.

"How can I possibly—"

"Do you? Do you?"

She had to tell the truth to those eyes gazing in the darkness. "I feel she may be."

He swung round as if he were going off at once, but she held his arm. "Probably I am wrong. We had better wait a little . . . give them the quarter of an hour."

"And if by then she has not come you will go with me to his house?"

"But what could I possibly— Why do you—"

"Let us walk up and down. We will not stay here a minute beyond the quarter of an hour. I swear that."

He began to walk. She went with him. For a quarter of an hour they paced up and down in front of the *pension*. Carl Fügler was plunged in thought. Now and then Miss Vyvyan spoke to him. He did not hear her apparently, for he did not answer. But two or three times he spoke to her. Once he said, "If she is there that settles it!" Another time he said, "If I find her there I shall know what to do."

"What will you do?" Miss Vyvyan asked. But apparently he didn't hear her, for he made no answer and didn't look at her. Several times he took out his watch.

Presently he stood still. "The quarter of an hour is over," he said. "Come along!"

"But how can I go with you to Dr. Artz?" she said, revolting. Her heroic mood still persisted. She was almost morbidly eager for self-sacrifice. But something exquisitely sensitive within her shrank from confronting Dr. Artz with Carl Fügler. To do that, after all that had happened here in Zurich, was surely impossible for her.

"You must come!" he exclaimed ruthlessly. "A woman may be wanted. I may need a woman."

A woman! Not even "you"! "Why—a woman?" she managed to say.

"To explain—if she refuses! She may not take it from me, a man. I am young, too!"

"But what are you going to do?—I mean if she *is* there?"

"Come along! Come along!" he exclaimed. And he started off hurriedly in the direction of Mühlebachstrasse.

Till they were at the bottom of the hill in Kreuzstrasse by the side of Dr. Artz's garden wall not another word was exchanged between them. But then Carl seemed once more aware that he had a companion. He looked down on his strangely compelled adherent and said, "If they say Artz is not in, I shall not go."

"But—"

"I do not care about conventions!"

"I know, but—"

"If she is there he will have told the servant to say he is out."

"But you can't force your—"

"That is just what I am going to do! Come on!"

The hill was short. In a moment, as it seemed to Miss Vyvyan, she and Carl Fügler were before the tall iron gate of Dr. Artz's domain. Carl put his hand to it. But she stopped him resolutely. "Wait, Mr. Fügler!"

Still holding the gate he looked down on her and said, "Well?"

"Before we go in you must tell me what you propose to do, and what you think I can do. I mean if Pauline *is* here."

"I mean to take her away of course. You do not suppose I am going to leave her here with that brute?"

"But what use can I be? After all that has happened—"

"Are you afraid of Artz? Is that it?" he demanded.

"No," she said swiftly. She felt herself flushing.

"Then come in with me and help me to get Pauline away. I feel she is here."

He opened the gate and held it for Miss Vyvyan to pass into the garden, followed her, letting the gate swing to behind him, sprang up the steps and thrust at the bell. After a pause that seemed long to Miss Vyvyan the door was opened by Heinrich, whose fair German-Swiss face showed astonished embarrassment at the sight of the visitors.

"We have come to see the Herr Doktor," said Carl. And he stepped resolutely into the hall. Miss Vyvyan followed him.

But Heinrich did not shut the door. He held it wide open, continued to stand by it and said, in a resolute voice: "The Herr Doktor is not in the house. The Herr Doktor is not coming home tonight. He has gone to sleep at the *clinique*."

"That is a lie!" said Carl. "This lady and I have just seen the Herr Doktor in town."

Heinrich looked terribly taken aback and confused, but he had evidently learned his lesson, for he said, still with a strong effort after resolution: "I cannot help that, sir. The Herr Doktor told me he was going to stay at the *clinique* tonight. He will not be back here till tomorrow."

"Shut that door!" said Carl savagely.

"But, sir, as the Herr Doktor is away—"

"I know he is not away. I know he is here in the house."

"I assure you, sir, that the Herr Doktor—"

"We are going to stay here till the Herr Doktor is pleased to see us, this lady and I. This lady has been the Herr Doktor's patient—"

"I know it, sir, but if the lady wishes to consult him for tonight she must go to the *clinique*, as the Herr Doktor—"

"Enough of that!" exclaimed Carl. And he strode up to the horrified young man, caught hold of his wrist, with a sudden twist wrenched his hand away from the door handle and shut the heavy door with a bang. "Now," he said, turning round,

"go and tell your master that Fraülein Vyvyan and Carl Fügler, both of them known to him, having just seen him in Huguenin's tea-room, are here to see him again in his own house, and must have a few words with him. Make haste, man! We will wait here. It is no use your repeating the lies you have been ordered to say if anyone calls. Miss Vyvyan, let me give you a chair."

A look of sheer desperation distorted the face of the footman as he saw Carl pull forward the carved chair from the wall where it stood under the Dürer copy and gently, but with determination, oblige Miss Vyvyan to sit down in it.

"No, sir! No, sir!" he exclaimed. "I will not! I cannot take my orders from you, sir. You are not my master, sir."

"You will go and tell the Herr Doktor at once—or I will find him myself." Carl looked round the large hall. "I will begin with the rooms here—open all those doors."

"Sir, this is not your house. You have no right—"

"Very well!" Carl Fügler exclaimed. And with a stride he was at the door nearest to him, threw it open and disclosed gaping darkness. "Not here! Then now for another!" he said, making for a second door.

"Fraülein! Fraülein!" exclaimed Heinrich. "Stop the Herr. What will my master say when—"

"Herr Fügler!" said Miss Vyvyan, getting up. "I don't—"

Carl stopped by the second door and turned on her. "Do you think I am going away from here without finding out whether she is in the house or not?"

"No, I—oh, wait just a moment!" She was trembling with excitement. "Let me speak to the servant!"

"Well—then!"

Miss Vyvyan turned to Heinrich, and making a great effort to speak calmly in her ordinary voice said: "We have no wish to do anything unusual here. But we really must see Dr. Artz. We know he has not gone to the *clinique*. No doubt you are carrying out your orders. But do please go to the Herr Doktor and announce our—our visit to him."

"But, Fraülein, as I have said—"

"If you tell that lie to me again you will be sorry for it! said Carl savagely.

"Go, please! Go and tell Dr. Artz we are here and must see him," said Miss Vyvyan. "It will be much better. It is the only thing to do. I will explain. Please go."

Heinrich looked from Carl Fügler to Miss Vyvyan and then again at Carl Fügler. He was scarlet with agitation. But apparently the second look at Carl Fügler decided him, for suddenly showing a face heavy with sulky indignation he walked slowly away behind the carved wooden staircase, and they heard a click which told of an opening door, then a faint sound of low voices.

"He *is* here—you see!" said Carl to Miss Vyvyan, frowning. Miss Vyvyan looked at him but said nothing. His savage decision had entirely subdued her. She had never seen a man like this before. A barbarian—was he? But what a lover! She anticipated with an intensity that seemed to hold fear mingled with something that was almost triumphant the clash between him and Dr. Artz. What was Carl Fügler going to say? What was he going to do? What could he do? His excitement and fierce determination had so worked upon her mind that she had begun to think of Dr. Artz as one thinks of a dangerous criminal, to think about him melodramatically. But now, during this momentary pause, she realized that there was nothing criminal in his entertaining Pauline for an hour in his house in the late afternoon—if indeed she were there.

But was she there? That question suddenly rose in her mind as she now saw Dr. Artz walking down the large hall from the back of the staircase followed by Heinrich, who was still scarlet with anger and embarrassment, and who at once disappeared, in the direction, no doubt, of the servants' quarters.

"What is this? Mademoiselle Vyvyan and Herr Fügler! You have come to see me? My servant tells me you insist, although, to tell the truth, I am occupied at the moment. What is it, please?"

His manner was self-possessed and calm, dignified, even, but Miss Vyvyan noticed that his eyes were shining fiercely, as if

he were greatly excited, and that his face was duskily red. There was also, or it seemed so to her, something peculiarly vivid about his whole person. She thought of it as an emanation—something that glared.

She had opened her lips to say something—she didn't know what—when Carl said:

"We make no apology for disturbing you, Herr Doctor. We will not take up your time. Miss Vyvyan and I saw you at Huguenin's just now with Miss Iselle, and as Miss Vyvyan is on her way to Madame Müller's *pension* she decided to call here en route for Miss Iselle, so that Miss Iselle might not have to walk home alone in the dark. That is all. Perhaps you can kindly tell her that we are here." Carl's manner had changed. The savagery he had shown to the footman had disappeared. He spoke calmly, prosaically, with apparently complete self-control.

Dr. Artz stood for a moment without saying a word. His large arms hung at his sides. His big capable hands were still. All his oddly shaped body was still. But Miss Vyvyan had the definite impression that he was blazing with anger. If so he was perhaps waiting in a determined effort not to show that.

"We know she is here!" Carl added, as Dr. Artz did not speak.

"Certainly Miss Iselle is here, paying an afternoon visit to my house of her own free will." He addressed himself now to Miss Vyvyan. "It is very good of you to think of fetching her, but really there is no danger after dark in my good city of Zurich. And moreover I shall have the pleasure to escort Miss Iselle to the *pension* when she is ready to leave."

His manner was perfectly simple and polite with just a nuance of the lightest possible sarcasm. Miss Vyvyan felt—as no doubt he designed that she should—at a great disadvantage. But she remembered what she knew about Dr. Artz, and she saw the look in Carl's young eyes, and she said firmly:

"I think it will be best if Miss Iselle comes home with me now. I am sure she will be ready to do so if you don't mind just telling her I am here."

"Oh, but she knows you are here!" said Dr. Artz with a smile. "And as you see she is in no hurry to leave." Miss Vyvyan was completely disconcerted by his tone and manner.

It was afternoon still—not night. Pauline was twenty-one, had quite definitely discarded Miss Vyvyan as chaperon. Miss Vyvyan had no accusation to bring against Dr. Artz in regard to Pauline except the deception he had practiced on herself about his offer of money. The man was in his own house and had of course the right to entertain there any guest he chose. Pauline was twenty-one. Twenty-one! The number of her years seemed to stand up and confront Miss Vyvyan, like some huge advertisement on a board.

And Dr. Artz stood there smiling.

"Pauline knows I am here?" she said.

"Certainly; and also that Herr Fügler is here."

Miss Vyvyan looked at Carl Fügler. She was paralyzed by the conventions which he had asserted his disdain of.

"So—" said Dr. Artz, and his small black eyes seemed to be suddenly fascinated by his own handsome front door. The hint was obvious and it was a very broad one. "Get out!" those eyes seemed to say—very politely of course.

Miss Vyvyan's eyes appealed to Carl Fügler, and it seemed to her that even he was at a loss for the moment, for he stood looking at Dr. Artz with the formidable, and yet somehow detached, expression characteristic of him when his mind was apparently trying to deal with some obsessing problem. There was an instant of profound and embarrassing silence. It was broken by Carl. "You say Miss Iselle knows we are here!"

"Yes, Herr Fügler, she does."

"Does she know that we know she is here?" The slight smile left Dr. Artz's face. "She does not!" said Carl, without waiting for an answer to his question. "I will go and tell her."

He was about to go towards the end of the large hall when Dr. Artz, with a surprisingly swift movement, got in front of him. "Wait, please, Herr Fügler! I have borne from you a good deal, but there are limits to everyone's patience. This is my house, not yours, and every man is master in his own house.

The insolence of youth I am well accustomed to. In these days men of my age are unable to avoid it. They meet it everywhere. As a rule I prefer to ignore it, but not in my own house. I have no wish to make a quarrel with you before a lady, but I must preserve my own self-respect—we will not even call it dignity. I have now had enough, and more than enough, of insolence from you. You seem to me an exaggerated specimen of the youth of the present time. Each man has his place in the world and his rights in the world. The shout goes up in all countries since the war, 'The world belongs to youth.' But I deny that. I say that the world belongs to us all, without respect of age or insolence. *Your* shout, allow me to say, makes no impression at all upon me, noisy and persistent as it is. But I have heard it now long enough. My ears are tired of it. I must therefore ask you to lift up your baritone voice, which my friend Marakoff I believe thinks a very promising one, outside my house. I must ask you to go and shout as much as you like in my good city of Zurich. Here, in my own house. I prefer peace and quiet, and I mean to have both. Allow me, therefore, to ask you kindly to leave me, and not to come here again unless I invite you."

Dr. Artz spoke rapidly not rudely, but with a gathering sarcasm which betrayed an interior anger kept with difficulty under control. He did not look at Miss Vyvyan. There was no inclusion of her in his inhospitable request. Deliberately he ignored her. She had become a mere looker-on in a contest which seemed to her to be one not merely between two men whom she knew but between two opposing forces—force of one generation against another.

When Dr. Artz stopped speaking she looked from him to Carl Fügler. Knowing what a raging talker Carl could be when he was deeply stirred, how he loved to loose his mind in speech, she expected a tremendous outburst from him on the inspiring subject of youth's shining rights in a world littered with elderly people who had brought it low in the dust of battle. But Carl, who had often surprised her by his violence, now amazed her by his cool self-control.

"Herr Doktor," he said, "you can have all the peace you want on one condition."

"But I do not choose to accept any conditions from you."

"I am afraid you will have to."

"But I think not. I refuse all conditions."

"You do not even ask me what my condition is?"

"I do not. I do not care what it is."

"That is easy to say. But I think you will have to care when I tell you. Now please! Let me just tell you. It will save argument. And Miss Vyvyan is here with us. We must remember that."

"I have not forgotten it!" said Artz sharply. "You need not try to give me lessons in politeness, Herr Fügler!"

"My condition is this. You can have all the peace you want if you will kindly leave my fiancée alone."

Miss Vyvyan felt the startled blood rush to her face. She had not expected this. A curious pain at her heart was mingled with something like triumph in the mind. Carl Fügler had recovered his self-assurance in the crisis. Her femininity saluted it as magnificent.

But Pauline? She was there, in the house, close to him, able at any moment to come out and expose this great lie. And then what could Carl Fügler do? At that moment Miss Vyvyan felt herself to be an amazing, an almost incredible contradiction. For she absolutely trembled with the desire for Carl's complete triumph.

Dr. Artz seemed for an instant to be overwhelmed by Carl's cool statement. He lifted both his arms in a curious gesture of repellence which had in it surely something weak and almost faltering. His face became pale in patches, then suddenly congested. "She—Miss Iselle your fiancée!" he said. "No! It is not true!"

"It is true!" Carl turned round upon Miss Vyvyan. "Is it not true?" he said. "Did I not tell you today that I was going to marry Pauline?"

Miss Vyvyan heard her voice say, "Yes, you did."

"She would have told me! She would have told me!" said

Dr. Artz. While he was saying it he seemed to recover from his momentary indecision, which had even suggested feebleness. "She would never have dared to—"

"Please do not say 'dared' about my fiancée!" exclaimed Carl. "She has no obligations to you."

"Has she not indeed?" said Dr. Artz fiercely. "So—you do not even know what she is, your fiancée! You know she is here —yes! But you do not why she is here!"

Carl made a movement as if he were going to strike Dr. Artz, then dropped his arm. "Explain!" he said, "and if you dare to—"

"I shall dare to say the truth—just that, Herr Fügler. Violence from you will not deter me. You bluster through life. I know that. I understand you made a scene just lately at the Bellevue Bar, with Prince Khalil Ibrahim. All Zurich is talking about it. It seems you had tried to strike him, and were held back by your own friends, some of whom even helped him to escape from your brutality. I shall not try to escape. I am not afraid of you."

"Explain yourself!"

"Very well. The young lady, who you *say* is your fiancée, has come here this evening in order to make a financial arrangement with me. She is allowing me to provide for her life here in Zurich so long as she continues to study with my friend Monsieur Marakoff. We were in the act of settling the little matter when you interrupted us. Surely it is rather strange for a young lady who is engaged to marry one man to permit another man to—" He turned to Miss Vyvyan. "In England I believe you would call it 'run' her. Is it not so? Or perhaps I am wrong?"

He still continued to speak rapidly and to simulate a lightly sarcastic tone, but it was obvious that he was now intensely angry, and Miss Vyvyan had the impression that Carl Fügler's unexpected assertion had diverted his anger to Pauline. Evidently Carl's lie had made a deep impression on Dr. Artz. Whether he absolutely believed in it as truth it was impossible to tell, but it was certain that he was now in doubt as to

whether Pauline had not been keeping him in the dark about her relations with Carl Fügler.

"In any case," he continued, "This is my house, and I now call upon you, Herr Fügler, to leave it at once. And, Mademoiselle Vyvyan, as you came here with this young gentleman I must, with all politeness, beg you to go with him, and to represent to him, from the English point of view, the outrage he has committed in forcing himself upon me. Heinrich! Heinrich!" He made a step towards the door by which the footman had gone out and again shouted, "Heinrich!"

A voice in the distance replied, "Coming, Herr Doktor!" And almost instantaneously the door, a swing door, was pushed. It swung inwards violently, and Heinrich appeared perspiring, his eyes fixed on his master, and bearing with both hands a large silver tray covered with things which, in a flash of time, carried Miss Vyvyan as if on a magic carpet to a great green and white drawing-room in London. Artz was there, as here. She was with him—Pauline—Miss Anna—the eager old Jew, Meyer, now fallen into the abyss from which she felt tonight that he would never struggle up again, even though impelled by his hatred of his betrayer.

But Carl Fügler was not there. Strange, incredible now it seemed, that then she had not known of Carl Fügler's existence. Now he was here, abolishing the past, slowly recalling her to the present, here with Dr. Artz close to the hidden Pauline. And again Dr. Artz's orders were being carried out, what he had called for was being brought. But this time not for her, not for Miss Anna, not for Meyer, but only for himself and Pauline. Eggs in a bowl, Bovril, a decanter of golden brandy, another decanter containing glycerin, glasses—two only—silver spoons, the paraphernalia for what Artz had called his "brew." Only the blue bottle—of—was it iodin?—was missing. But of course Dr. Artz would produce that at the appropriate moment.

"The cocktail!" she whispered, without knowing that she had formed any words.

Heinrich, evidently arrested by his master's eyes, had stopped

on his way to the room where Pauline was hidden. He stood still, staring over the laden tray. His whole body seemed to be asking a question, a terrified question.

Dr. Artz, who had shown embarrassment on the footman's arrival—quite evidently he had not expected the tray with him—now seemed to recover himself with an effort. "Go on!" he exclaimed, angrily. "What are you waiting for?"

"I thought perhaps the Herr Doktor—"

"Go on, I tell you."

Heinrich was about to go when Carl took hold of his arm. "Brandy—what is all this?" he said. The sight of the tray with its bottles and glasses evidently put the final touch to his hatred and suspicion of Dr. Artz. "What is this? What are you doing to her?" he exclaimed. "Do you think I shall allow you to make any of your abominable experiments on her?" He seized the decanter containing the glycerin and pulled out the stopper. "What is this stuff?"

"Put that down, Herr Fügler. How dare you interfere with my household arrangements? Let my servant go at once!"

"I shall not let him go until I know what you are doing to her!"

"I will not bear this any longer!" said Dr. Artz. He took hold of Carl by the wrist. Carl made a violent movement to disengage himself. His movement upset the tray. All that was in it fell to the ground, and the decanter Carl was holding dropped from his hand.

"Herr Fügler! Herr Fügler! Carl!" Miss Vyvyan cried out. She thought there was going to be a physical struggle between the two men and was terrified. But at this moment Pauline came quickly out into the hall from behind the staircase. Her gray eyes were full of fear. In one hand she held a large, rather bulky, yellow envelop.

"Oh, what is it? What is it?" she exclaimed. "Miss Vyvyan!" And she went to Miss Vyvyan like one instinctively seeking protection. "What is it?" she repeated, looking from Fügler to Dr. Artz, and then to the débris on the carpet.

"What is it?" exclaimed Artz. "It is intrusion! It is inso-

lence! It is absolute barbarity!" He lifted up both fists. "Barbarity! Barbarity! But I will make an end of it!" He turned on the wretched Heinrich. "Clear away all that, you fool!" he exclaimed. "Clear it away, I tell you!"

"Yes, Herr Doktor! Yes, Herr Doktor!" Heinrich bent down trembling to gather up the bits of broken glass which were scattered over the carpet in a pool of brandy and glycerin.

"And you, Herr Fügler!" said Dr. Artz. "Leave my house! Go at once or I will telephone for the police."

"Come, Pauline!" said Carl.

"Yes, yes!"

Carl went towards her.

"Miss Iselle is not going!" said Artz. "She is my guest. How dare you force her to leave my house when she has no wish to—"

"I must go, indeed!" said Pauline. "I am going." She caught hold of Miss Vyvyan's hand. "Take me with you!"

"Of course you are going with us!" said Carl, in a loud voice full of steady assurance. "I have explained things to Dr. Artz. I have told him that you are going to marry me, and that therefore I have the right to take care of you."

Pauline looked up in Carl Fügler's eyes. "Marry you!" she murmured.

"Of course! Is it not true?" He bent his strong head and looked steadily into her eyes. "Have you not give me the right to take care of you? Are you not going to marry me?" he said, in a suddenly tender voice.

After a moment Pauline nodded twice. As she moved her fair head a long, soft sigh came from her. "Yes," she said, in the sigh. She looked at Dr. Artz. Something she saw in his face, now convulsed with anger, seemed to make her decisive. "It is true!" she said. "I belong to him."

She looked once more at Carl. Miss Vyvyan saw no longer the Pauline Iselle whom she had worked for, begged for, tyrannized over, loved, almost hated, and finally resigned all her personal happiness for, but simply woman, submissive, yielding to the strength, mental, moral, physical too, of the male,

whose excuse for dominion was the eternal excuse that finds favor with women, robust love and the flame of desire.

She saw all this. But she saw even more. In Pauline just then she saw herself.

As they went out Pauline laid down surreptitiously on a table in the hall near the door the big yellow envelop she had in her hand.

XLII

JUST after nine o'clock that evening a page boy tapped at Miss Vyvyan's bedroom door and announced that a lady had called to see her, at the same time handing her an unnecessary card with Miss Anna Meyer's name on it.

"Please tell the lady I am coming immediately," said Miss Vyvyan.

When the page boy had gone Miss Vyvyan looked for a moment into a mirror. She knew no eyes more penetrating than Miss Anna's, and she was feeling transparent. As she looked it seemed to her that her face was horribly expressive, horribly alive, as if in it her life was laid bare like an undressed body. She tried to look more simple, calmer, less dreadfully vital, tried to diminish her expressiveness. After waiting a moment, she turned off the light and went down.

Miss Anna was waiting for her in the reading-room of the hotel with a copy of the Times in her hand. "I haven't come too early?" she said, as Miss Vyvyan came up to her. "Dinner is thoroughly over?"

"Oh yes, long ago. But I didn't dine tonight."

"No?"

"Let us sit down. I'll take you to a quiet corner. . . . This will do."

Miss Anna sat down. She was dressed in black, with a sable fur which she laid aside, and a black hat of the shape which she always wore, a sort of three-sided toque coming to a point on the forehead, and showing much of her snow-white hair.

Miss Vyvyan sat down by her, and there was an instant of silence. Miss Anna broke it by saying, "And how has Zurich turned out?"

"Zurich!" Miss Vyvyan's voice had a startled sound. "For me, do you mean?"

"For you and the lark?"

"Oh, I don't matter."

"Don't you?"

"As to Pauline though—" She stopped.

"Yes?" said Miss Anna. "I am interested in that child."

"Why?"

"Partly because she is interesting, in a curious quiet way."

Miss Vyvyan waited for more. She expected a continuation beginning "And partly—" but it didn't come.

"Pauline—she has got on quite well with her singing, I think."

"Yes?"

"And she is going to be married."

Miss Anna's white old face showed astonishment.

"You are surprised?"

"Very!"

"But why?"

"Well, indeed, and why should I be astonished at such a natural happening as a pretty young girl getting engaged to be married? But I am. And that just shows how unusual I had come to think Miss Iselle. And so *that* is the end of it all!"

"The end?"

"Let us say of the chapter in which you, my brother, Miss Iselle and Dr. Artz were concerned. Unless—she's not engaged to Dr. Artz?"

"No. She is going to marry the young man—a student of singing—you met me with at Huguenin's."

"A bit of granite with plenty of fire behind it, I should say. And so Dr. Artz who spends his time in trying to defeat old age has been defeated by youth."

She paused for a moment. She looked very old and very wise in her silence.

"It is a good victory," she said at last. "And yet something in me rebels against it."

"What is that?"

"Something artistic. We Jews, you know, are incurably artistic. I believe that girl was meant to be a singing bird."

"Why shouldn't she be a singing bird still?"

"The bit of granite! He'll upset her. If she marries him she'll never be a lark, purely and only a lark."

"It can't be helped," said Miss Vyvyan.

"Wedding bells so soon! I didn't expect it."

Meeting those bright old eyes Miss Vyvyan was moved to say, "What did you expect?"

"Expect? I feared. But now I shall never tell anyone what my fears were. And yet, if I have any perception of character, they were not absurd. But, with all our experience, how seldom we make allowance for the entrance upon the stage of the new figure that so often changes the entire trend of the play. I knew my brother. I divined Dr. Artz. Oh, I am sure I divined Dr. Artz! But the existence of the singing student—that was hidden from me. How does Dr. Artz take it?"

"I would rather not say."

"My dear!" said Miss Anna, with unusual gentleness. "I'm sure you have had a difficult time out here."

"Perhaps I have—rather."

"The altruist in difficulties!"

"I am not an altruist!'

"I think you are—fundamentally. Do you know I am fond of you! You are a golden creature. Little patches of alloy here and there, perhaps. But still a golden creature! I am leaving tomorrow. I am taking my brother home."

"So soon?"

"It is time. He is full of threatenings. But Dr. Artz can rest in peace so far as Leo is concerned. Leo has shot his last bolt. He belongs only to me now." She laid a thin hand on Miss Vyvyan's sharp little knee. "I have loved him through all the manias—and pitied him. There are none who suffer so much as the victims of mania. They never know peace."

She got up and Miss Vyvyan followed her example.

"Come to see me when you are back in London. Let us be friends."

"Yes—thank you."

"And convey my good wishes to her who perhaps now will never be a true lark."

At the door, as Miss Anna was about to go down to her motorcar, she took both Miss Vyvyan's hands in hers and gave her a kiss on the forehead.

XLIII

IN AUGUST of the following year a great musical festival was announced to take place in Zurich. Its president was the celebrated German conductor Herr Wilhelm Krohl of Berlin and Leipzig. During ten days there were to be concerts of orchestral, choral, and chamber music, pianoforte, violin, and song recitals. The Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic orchestras had been engaged, a famous choir from the north of England, a great Italian baritone, an equally great Austrian soprano, a world-famous violinist, a pianist whose name could fill any concert hall in Europe. Best of all, the "young ones" were to have an opportunity of showing what they could do.

Herr Krohl was a musician of wide sympathies, a man of the open door in art. The talented young men and women in music could always be sure of a hearing and encouragement from him, on one condition. This condition was—sincerity. They must be sincere in their work. Herr Krohl abhorred the charlatan, the trickster, the showman, the publicity merchant. Drastically sincere himself, he demanded from others his own virtue.

At this festival in Zurich several new works by young musicians of various nationalities were to be given for the first time, and an American boy from Boston would be judged as a pianist in a concerto composed by himself.

All this promised much of interest. But the attention and

curiosity of the wide public which without being learnedly musical is fond of music, and especially of hearing the great executants, the so-called "stars" in the musical firmament, had been roused and rendered keen by a promise which had nothing to do with "les jeunes." An astonishing piece of news had been given out to the chief European papers and had of course been cabled to America.

Marakoff, the great Russian tenor, after an absence from the operatic stage which had lasted for years, was announced to make his reappearance at the Stadt Theater on the last night of the festival as Rhadames in Verdi's "Aïda," with a company mainly drawn from the Paris opera house.

Marakoff as Rhadames! Then his marvelous tenor voice, a *tenore robusto* with an electrifying D Flat from the chest in it, had been restored to him. His breakdown—so it was called—in the Russian Revolution had not been the final catastrophe his innumerable admirers had feared. The great voice had come back. It must have come back, otherwise he would never dare to essay such a part as Rhadames, a part containing the difficult air, "Celeste Aïda," at the beginning of the first act, a cold-blooded necessity of song dreaded, from the time when the opera was first given in Egypt, by tenors innumerable.

There was talk about this in musical circles all over Europe and America, and the demand for seats was so great that the Stadt Theater, large though it is, could easily have been filled many times, so eagerly curious was the public to hear again the voice which it had supposed finally impaired, if not indeed entirely destroyed, by the hardships Marakoff, with multitudes of others, had endured in the war and the immediately following revolution in Russia.

Applications for seats flowed in from nearly all the countries of Europe, and rich Americans offered large sums for boxes and stalls. The critics, too, were keenly on the alert. Marakoff was emphatically "news." He had always been news, but now he had become news to make a sensation with. The management of the Festival, and more especially of the Stadt

Theater, was almost tempted to wish that it had never been offered the chance to make this amazing "scoop." This matter of a great dramatic artist's reentry upon the public scene became as a nightmare to those who had to deal with it. Niagara seemed determined to pour itself into a teacup.

The management of the Stadt Theater finally decided that applications for seats from unknown persons should be answered by the sending of a printed slip, stating that all the reserved seats for "Aïda" were already allotted. It would be stupid to keep out the somebodies on such a great occasion and to let in a crowd of nobodies. Certain famous critics—a few only—must of course have seats. The rest of the places would be distributed carefully among the chief notabilities of Zurich and celebrities from here, there, and everywhere.

The best box in the theater was given, not sold, to Dr. Artz. Other boxes and stalls were disposed of to Ilidor Heckner, the famous conductor, to Princess Teresco, to Miss Anna Meyer—who had telegraphed from London for a box directly the astonishing announcement of Marakoff's return had appeared in the London Times—and to the chief "backer" of the Metropolitan Opera of New York.

Two stalls in the middle of the parterre were (reluctantly) handed over by the management to a couple of no importance, to Herr Carl Fügler and his wife, Frau Fügler, of Goethestrasse, Zurich. This by order of Marakoff, who among many other parts knew how to play the part of a dictator.

It is not, perhaps, very often that the name of a famous singer is persistently coupled with the name of a doctor. Artz saw to it that his name now ran over the world coupled with the name of Marakoff.

He was absolutely frank about the whole matter of publicity with Marakoff. "All this has been brought about by *me,*" he said. "But for me, my dear Marakoff, your name, great though it is, would soon have died out of the public's treacherous memory. Already, before this réclame, many people thought you were dead. This resurrection has been solely my doing. For it I have made a great sacrifice, as you know. Now whatever others

may choose to do, I do not choose to make great sacrifices for nothing. No! That would be very foolish, and I am not foolish. Some say here that I am wicked, but a fool I am not called, even by my own dear countrymen."

He smiled, and his smile was sinister. Indeed his whole manner had something of the sinister in it. The suavity and authoritative graciousness of Dr. Artz were considerably abated in these days of summer. Sometimes, when he felt sure that he was unobserved, he looked at Marakoff as if he hated him. But surely that was impossible. Could a man hate one to whom he had restored a great gift, the power to make a new fortune, the capacity to shine out once more before the hard eyes of the world?

"The risk I took for you," he continued, letting the smile go and looking harshly grave, "was a great one. But for Meyer's complete collapse after he reached London I might well have had an ugly law case on my hands. And all because of you! Even now from time to time I receive from him a postcard containing a threat traced in a spidery hand, scarcely readable, which shows senility. Fortunately for me he is well guarded by his old sister. Otherwise I might still have reason for fear. Yes, I have"—he frowned and his ugly, but powerful, face looked menacing—"I have endured a great deal for you. It is time, full time, that I had my reward for all this, and I mean to have it. Artz must have an equal advertisement with Marakoff from now on."

"I am willing! I am willing!" said Marakoff, in a voice which he kept very low. "Why talk as if I were so mean as to be reluctant? If it is a success I shall tell everyone. The whole world shall know that I owe it to you. If—*if* it is a success!"

"You and I know that all will go well."

"You are not afraid?"

"Are you?"

"We artists are full of nerves."

"To be full of nerves is not to be nervous."

"Once before the public I am never nervous. But that 'Celeste Aïda'—after all these years!"

"You yourself chose that opera."

"I did. Because it is a great test for a tenor of my caliber. You cannot husband your voice in 'Aïda.' It is all or nothing. One must either stand or fall."

"And you will stand."

"Of course I shall stand."

"If you do not," said Artz, with a sort of menacing severity, "you will ruin my reputation, and I have plenty of enemies here, people who fight against me." He fixed his small intent eyes on the big Russian. "Some even of those whom I thought I had a right to consider my friends have fought against me. That I have not forgotten. If, in addition, nerves are allowed to ruin my work at the critical moment why, then—"

He spread out his large arms in a wide gesture that looked like a gesture of supreme disgust and contempt.

"Nerves never yet overcame my powers," said Marakoff. "If the voice serves me all will go well."

"And then you will pay, and good-by to that cursed fellow, Artz. I know!"

Marakoff said nothing. Although a magnificent actor on the stage he seldom troubled to act when he was off it. Artz and he had few illusions about their relationship. They were held together only by a common bond of self-interest. Yet Artz had said those last words with a bitterness that sounded as if its source must lie in the heart of a man.

"I must be at your rehearsal," he added, after a pause in a changed voice.

"I am not going to rehearse!" said Marakoff abruptly.

"After all these years of retirement you are coming back without a rehearsal?"

"I know the whole opera backwards. I have sung it a hundred times."

"But the others? The Aïda—Miss Mary Arden?"

"She, too, knows it backwards. We have sung it together in America at the Metropolitan."

"And she consents?"

"Mary would do anything for me. She understands."

"But why—"

"I do not choose to rehearse! That is enough!" said Marakoff with almost savage emphasis. "My voice will be heard for the first time by the public. Krohl, the conductor, the whole company—they know they can depend on Marakoff. It is not as if it were a new opera and I were an untried singer. Enough!"

Artz said nothing more. But from that moment his latent uneasiness about the result of his great experiment increased. He was indeed beset by uneasiness. He was getting enormous publicity. That he had aimed at and insisted on. It was part of his bargain with Marakoff. But if anything went wrong? That publicity would then be a weapon turned against him. And it was a weapon that might prove murderous. Marakoff's failure would be his, Artz's, failure, too. But the voice was there. He had done his part. Why be uneasy?

Artz was very seldom sincere with his fellow men, and scarcely ever sincere with women until he was sick of them, but he was sometimes sincere with himself. He was sincere with himself now. His present uneasiness, he knew, took its rise in the failure which had embittered his life and severely shaken his confidence in himself. That student, Carl Fügler, cutting ruthlessly through the strands of the web of intrigue Artz had carefully woven, had in a moment made all his subtlety, his cleverness, his cunning, seem ridiculous in his own eyes. Youth had given him such à fall as he had never had before.

Since the night when Carl had victoriously carried off Pauline from the house in Krabühlstrasse Dr. Artz had never been able to recover his former self-confidence. He had had a shock which had shaken him—perhaps permanently. He did not know. But he did know that he needed a triumph of some kind to restore his equanimity. As to happiness—when he thought of the girl, whom he had first seen in Carlton House Terrace, tucked away in a little new house in Goethestrasse with that "poisonous baritone," he disbelieved in the possibility of any real happiness being left in the world for him.

He had begun to hate youth as much as any of his patients

hated it. Princess Teresco scarcely hated youth more than Dr. Artz did now. His big house seemed horribly empty. Even his quartet evenings no longer held much attraction for him. He was ashamed, terribly, though secretly, ashamed of his own failure. In his ugly, almost horrible way, he had been desperately in love with Pauline. The loss of her rankled in his mind. Jealousy pursued him. Although he no longer had any intercourse with Carl Fügler or Carl Fügler's wife, chance had several times brought them in his way. Zurich is not very large. Everyone who lives in Zurich is to be seen from time to time in Bahnhofstrasse, or on the leafy promenade that borders the lake shore. More than once Dr. Artz had met the young couple face to face, and had been forced to see their happiness, and, mirrored in it, his own disastrous failure. Carl's steady relentless eyes had gazed into the eyes of the man he had so audaciously beaten in the race for love. Pauline had flushed and seemed hesitating whether to bow or not. But Dr. Artz had walked firmly on without any salutation. He would not salute the triumphant flag of youth. He had been so certain—and Carl Fügler had won through so easily!

"My fiancée!"

Dr. Artz simply did not believe that Pauline had ever made any promise to Carl Fügler before that evening at Huguenin's and her subsequent visit to his house in Krahbühlstrasse. If it had been so Pauline would not have accepted his money. No; Fügler had with inspired impudence stated as fact that which was not fact. And Pauline had yielded, had perhaps fallen in love with the sheer audacity of the thing.

Whenever Dr. Artz thought of her at night—and this was often—his imagination saw her surreptitiously laying down on the little table in his hall a yellow envelop. That secret action had been the symbol of his defeat. When the fair girl had laid down the yellow envelop she had put Dr. Artz out of her life. What a slight movement of a limb can mean!

But away with these miserable, useless, defeating recollections! Now for a triumph in the face of the world! Lust frustrated—or was it love?—must be dismissed into the limbo of

things forgotten. Solid fame, and all that it would inevitably bring to him, would soon console him for that searing disappointment. And of course he would eventually have got tired of her! It was not in him to be faithful. He had an incurably faithless body. That was the trouble with Dr. Artz.

He would concentrate on Marakoff, the man whom he hated secretly, but who must bring him the fame which would lift him to an impregnable position in his profession and take away from him all financial anxieties.

He made up his mind to that. But as the time drew near to the opening of the festival he was haunted by nervous fears. The immense publicity connected with his experiment on Marakoff began to alarm him. He had played for it, of course. He had foreseen it, and because he had foreseen it he had tricked Meyer. He had deliberately thrown away the lesser for the greater publicity. Now he had it, and sometimes it confronted him like a monster.

Marakoff was in a marvelous condition of health, thanks to him, Artz. His impaired nervous system had been restored to its former strength and elasticity. There was no doubt at all of his power to resist the fatigue of performances in opera. Youth, such youth at least as modern science can give, had been ingeniously introduced into his system. The voice had gradually become apparent, had developed and now was strong. Then why be afraid?

But Artz was afraid.

Travelers began to flow into Zurich. The hotels filled up. Even the unpretentious hotels near the station were crowded with music lovers, with young composers, with critics who could not find room in the larger establishments nearer the lake. One morning Artz saw in his paper a piece of news that startled him. It was this:

> The celebrated financier and patron of music, Mr. Leon Meyer, and his sister, Miss Meyer, have arrived at the Hotel Baur-au-Lac, and will attend several of the concerts during the festival which is about to begin. Mr.

Meyer has retained a box for the performance of Verdi's "Aïda," which will bring back to the operatic stage the great tenor, Marakoff, who has lived for so many years in retirement.

Meyer in Zurich! Artz put down the paper. He had received a shock and was unpleasantly conscious of it. He remembered the postcards he had had from time to time containing vague threats written in a spidery weak handwriting that was almost undecipherable. They had not seriously disturbed him. Meyer had crashed. He was finished with, gaga, too old, too weary, too senile to be dangerous. Besides, his old sister was with him, to guard him with the stern watchfulness of an unwavering affection. She possessed him at last, and was too wise to let him make a world-fool of himself from sheer malice.

So Dr. Artz had believed. But now Meyer had returned to Zurich. He was not then so senile, so deprived, as Dr. Artz had supposed. He was able to take a long journey. He was still interested in what was happening in the world away from England. The report of him which Dr. Artz had been careful to obtain from London must surely have been exaggerated. A man who was completely senile could not take such a journey. Miss Anna, that wise old Jewish lady, would not have allowed it. Artz was overcome by uneasiness. It seemed to him a bad omen, this arrival in Zurich of an enemy.

He went to see Marakoff. "How is the voice?"

"You need not be afraid of the voice."

"I am not afraid. You have not changed your mind about the rehearsal?"

"There will be rehearsals of course in the theater. Krohl insists upon that, and he is right, though the company knows the opera backwards. But I shall not sing. That is understood. I shall go there. I shall rehearse the positions, do all that is necessary. But the voice I shall not use."

"Why not?"

"I cannot use my recovered voice for the first time in all

the shabbiness of a rehearsal, with noises, interruptions, people walking about. I cannot. I will not. When the theater is full, attentive, silent, longing to hear me—then I will sing again, at last!"

"You are a strange fellow, Marakoff."

"And you, Artz! Are you not strange?"

The two men stood staring at each other for an instant. During that instant Artz had a vivid feeling of dread.

"Do you know that Miss Meyer and her brother are here and are going to your performance?" he asked.

"I knew she had taken a box."

"He is with her. Had you expected him?"

"I had not thought about it." He stretched out his arms and opened his chest. "I am full, full, full—of myself!" he exclaimed. "Meyer is old, finished. His ears are dull. Still he pays me a compliment by coming, and I must not disappoint him. That is my task, that is all I must think of—not to disappoint even one of all the crowd in the Stadt Theater on the last night of the festival."

"Take care not to disappoint *me!*" said Artz. *"I* am the one you must sing for. Have you forgotten that?" He spoke in an arrogant voice, and his small eyes were full of uneasy menace.

"You hate me, Artz!"

"No, I do not. But if you do not give your best—" He did not finish the sentence but turned away and went out of the room. Marakoff noticed that he stooped a little in walking.

"Artz is afraid!" he said to himself.

He went to stand in front of a mirror, stared into it and sang the first bars of "Celeste Aïda" in an under voice. For he was in his small flat and dared not sing out. Then he took his hat and hurried off to the studio. Fritz Rauch was there, his confidant, sworn to secrecy, the only one who had really heard the restored voice.

"To the piano, Fritz! To the piano! There is not much time now. That damnable Artz has upset my nerves! I will not see him again till I have proved myself. You alone know how it is."

The young Mozart looked at him doubtfully, then suddenly smiled as the long slanting eyes met his in a piercing glance of inquiry, and went to the piano.

Marakoff kept his word to Fritz Rauch. From that day he would not see Dr. Artz. He even wrote a note to Artz explaining why.

> You upset me. And I must not be upset in these days. A great ordeal is before me, one that you cannot perhaps understand. You have attended to my body. I must take care of that part of me which is not body. The voice, you may say, is physical. But there is that in the voice which is not physical, the mystery which stirs the world. We shall not meet again till my reappearance is over. Come round then, if you like, to my dressing-room, and if all has gone well I promise to acknowledge what I owe to your skill as a doctor and surgeon before everybody. You will not find me ungenerous, Artz.

On the same day that this communication from Marakoff reached him Artz received a postcard with a Swiss stamp on it. The address was almost illegible, but Artz knew the handwriting. It was Meyer's. He turned the card quickly over. A few faint and spidery words disfigured the paper. At first he could not read them, but after a careful, even an anxious consideration of them, he convinced himself that the words were: "I have not done with you, Artz." Below was a straggle of scratches meant probably for "L. M."

Artz sat over this card for several minutes with his small eyes fixed upon it. Then with a savage movement he tore it up and threw the fragments into a litter basket. Meyer would do nothing. If he had been in a condition to express his senile hostility in an act Artz would have been aware of it by now. The wise Miss Anna was surely Artz's guardian angel. Nevertheless Artz was painfully disturbed by the receipt of the card, posted in Zurich. His unusual sensation of nervousness was increased till it amounted to a latent dread which he could not

rid himself of. He had done a good many things of which the average man, had he known of them, would have disapproved, but of which Artz himself thought leniently. But he could not think leniently of his behavior to Meyer. And he had an unpleasant feeling that this senile, but persistent hatred of a feeble old man might have the power to influence events, to turn them in a direction which would be ruinous for him. A ridiculous feeling—but he had it.

He had taken tickets for all the concerts of the festival. Eagerly interested in all the developments in music he had been looking forward to an increase of knowledge as well as to emotional pleasure. But so great was his nervous tension that now he felt afraid to be seen in public, felt afraid of confronting his fellow citizens and the many strangers who had thronged into Zurich. The tickets lay in a drawer, and Dr. Artz remained shut up alone in his house. All the city was gay, all the city was full of music. And those humble citizens who could not well attend the great formal concerts at night packed the Brasserie Wolff on the Limmat Quai, where over beer-filled glasses they listened to the intensely vital performances of a little passionate romantic fantastic band from Vienna, led by a violinist with a head entirely bald, a white face, and a temperament full of devil.

But Artz heard no music.

Those were lonely days for Artz. He was not seeing patients. August was always his holiday time, and though he remained in Zurich it was understood that he gave no treatment to anyone, performed no operations, did not even visit his *clinique*. He remained stowed away in his big lonely house with the portraits of two fair women for company. Heinrich found him a difficult master.

When the final day of the festival came Dr. Artz said to Heinrich: "Lay out my evening clothes in good time tonight. I am going to the opera. Tell Lucien"—Lucien was Artz's chef, a French-Swiss—"to give me dinner at seven. I shall be alone. Put a bottle of *the* champagne on ice."

"Yes, Herr Doktor. A half-bottle?"

"Did I say a half-bottle?" asked Dr. Artz, putting his face suddenly nearer to Heinrich's, and concentrating on him the glance of a pair of savage eyes.

"Pardon, Herr Doktor!" said Heinrich, moving backwards a step.

"Wait!" said Artz.

"Herr Doktor?"

"At a quarter before seven bring a tray to the library with the ingredients for my cocktail."

"The one with the brandy, Bovril and glycerin, Herr Doktor?"

"Isn't that my cocktail?" exclaimed Artz in a loud voice.

"I will bring it, Herr Doktor, at a quarter before seven."

"If you ask me any more questions— Go! go!"

Heinrich hastened away, cursing under his breath. Artz paid good wages. But what a master! "I shall leave him! I shall leave him!" thundered Heinrich when he was in the servants' quarters. "Herr Gott! He gets more like Satan every day. Since the night when the student came and took that girl away from him he has not had a decent word for anyone."

"He will find another girl before long, and then there will be peace in the house—till he gets sick of her," said Lucien, the chef. "And anyhow he pays good wages."

"If he did not no one would stay with him, not even the cat," replied Heinrich.

"The cat gets no wages," Lucien corrected him.

"I know that," said Heinrich solemnly. He had some strong points but humor was not among them.

That evening Dr. Artz went up to his large bedroom soon after six o'clock. His evening clothes, a white stiff shirt, white collar and white tie were duly laid out on the enormous double bed in which he now slept every night by himself. The evening sunshine was slanting in brightly through the broad window spaces. In the garden some birds were still singing. There was in the atmosphere a golden calm of summer.

The summer seemed very lonely to Dr. Artz as he looked at the big double bed. But now for the retrieving of defeat!

Ambition within him was a powerful passion as well as lust. Perhaps this evening the ambition of his life would be gratified, as his lust had been gratified many times in the past. Perhaps on the morrow his name would be running over the world in connection with Marakoff's. For Marakoff's triumph would be his, Dr. Artz's triumph. The world should not be left in any doubt about that. Marakoff had promised and Artz knew he would keep his promise.

But if Marakoff failed?

Artz went into his elaborate bathroom. Marble had not been spared there. It looked like the bathroom of a fastidious woman. It had been devised for a fastidious woman. The little fool in Goethestrasse! What she had missed!

Presently Artz was dressed. He looked at himself in a full-length mirror. The ugly man who had achieved so much, who had married three beautiful women! But all that lay in the past, and to a man like Artz it is the future that matters. His rugged face was surely pale, noticeably pale? Wasn't it? As he stood there he realized that in all his long life he had never before had an "attack" of nerves. But he had an attack of nerves now.

He went downstairs to the library. On a silver tray were all the ingredients for the cocktail, except the contents of the purple bottle. That he had with him. He began to prepare the cocktail. As he did so he remembered his resolve in Carlton House Terrace. He had not doubted that he would be able to achieve what he had resolved on there. His confidence in himself had been supreme then. It was no longer supreme. A mere boy had shaken its foundations.

He took out the stopper from the purple bottle, measured out the drops, drank the cocktail.

Heinrich came in sullenly to tell him that dinner was ready.

"The champagne is on the ice?"

"Yes, Herr Doktor."

Dr. Artz went into his big dining-room and sat down alone. Heinrich brought in the champagne. When Dr. Artz had finished his dinner the bottle was empty.

At ten minutes to eight o'clock the motor stood at the door between the two unlighted lamps and Dr. Artz came out into the portico and got into it. The opera was not due to begin till a quarter past eight, but Dr. Artz was too restless to remain any longer shut up in his big house.

"Drive along the lake front," he said to his chauffeur. "But I want to be at the Stadt Theater not later than five minutes past eight."

"Yes, Herr Doktor."

Artz leaned back and shut his eyes. He had a strong head for liquor, but the cocktail and the bottle of champagne had altered his mood. His bitter nervous anxiety, amounting almost to fear, was replaced by a sort of heat of optimistic expectation. And it seemed to pulse through him in waves. He had a sensation as of waves, smooth, without crests, large silky waves surging blandly through him. With his eyes shut, conscious of the movement of his motorcar, he enjoyed it. Satisfied ambition, world-fame as a doctor, money pouring in—that was how it was going to be. His enemies in Zurich confounded. His envious colleagues silenced forever. His fellow citizens gratified to know that Zurich possessed a really great man. Women at his feet, multitudes of women! And the damned little fool living a pauper's life in Goethestrasse with her student husband made conscious of what she had missed! All women loved glory and longed to share it. She would suffer. Surely she would suffer. The bland waves rolled on and on.

And then the motor stopped. Artz opened his eyes. He saw a crowd of onlookers, curious people gathered together to see the celebrities arrive at the Stadt Theater.

Now for it!

He had invited no one to share his box. On such an occasion he could not tolerate company, the necessity to talk, to be agreeable. More than one of his acquaintances, knowing that he had a box, had hinted to him that their applications for seats had been cruelly refused and that they did not know what to do. He had smilingly ignored their misfortune.

In the entrance hall of the theater he found another crowd

of people. There was a loud hum, almost indeed a roar, of conversation. Many noticed him. The word went round that Marakoff's doctor had arrived. But Dr. Artz did not linger. He presented his ticket and went at once to his box, which was on the first tier.

The house was already three-quarters full. He had brought strong opera-glasses with him. He sat down and took them out of their case.

Now the waves seemed to be subsiding. He was less conscious of them. They seemed smaller, were surely dying down.

He put the glasses to his small bright eyes and looked through them at the parterre. Almost immediately he saw, enclosed as it were in the circle they made as in a prison, two heads, a man's head and a girl's, the heads of Carl Fügler and his wife, Pauline Fügler. Those two were talking eagerly and turning to each other. How horribly young and happy they looked!

After a long moment of intense observation Dr. Artz laid down his glasses. He sat quite still for a moment. In that moment he heard the tuning of instruments in the orchestra, that muddle of sounds so dear to a music lover's heart. Then he turned his head towards the left. He saw coming into a box near, but not quite close to his an old lady with handsome, refined Jewish features, snow-white, beautifully arranged hair and brilliant, critical dark eyes. She was dressed in black, and was giving an arm to a feebly moving, meager, bending old man, who walked very slowly and carefully with the aid of a stick.

Miss Anna helped her brother to come to the front of the box and to sit down in the right-hand corner of it. She seemed almost to lower him into the chair. Then she sat down by him. Her keen old eyes surveyed the house. She turned her white head in the direction of Dr. Artz. He looked away.

When he did that he saw, also near him, Princess Teresco dressed in white with carefully shingled hair, brightly painted cheeks and lips. She was accompanied by a very good-looking and robust blond young man, almost a boy, but obviously a very strong and athletic boy, who sat close to her and leaned

over towards her. She saw Dr. Artz and nodded satirically. The smile which accompanied the nod seemed to say:

"I am cleverer than you, you poor scientific man! I have a lover. But you are alone!"

Artz bowed heavily and again looked towards the Meyers' box. Now there were two people visiting in it: a woman and a man. The woman was no longer young, but was not unattractive, beautifully dressed in pearl-color and pale yellow, with a dark head, large dark oriental eyes, and the nose of an Israelite. One of the cultivated and self-possessed daughters of Israel, with the soft and languid charm that suggests the East and a life un-European. She was talking to Meyer, whose unlined face, yellow-white, looked blank with age as he stared up into her gently smiling eyes. Who was she? Artz didn't know. But he recognized in the animated vital man, small, smart, self-possessed, the famous conductor, Heckner.

Heckner was making Miss Anna laugh. But the lady in pearl-color and yellow did not coax even a smile to the blank yellow-white pallor of Meyer.

A bell sounded. The house now looked absolutely full, but more people were coming in. Amid applause the tall figure of Herr Krohl appeared in the orchestra. Heckner and his companion—she was Mrs. Simon, who had actually submitted herself to a journey beyond Paris—slipped out of the Meyer box. An oboe played a vagrant flourish. A double bass sounded a deep note that was almost a grunt. Herr Krohl, standing very erect and without any score in front of him, let his pale eyes range over his players authoritatively.

The lights went down. Artz felt a painful thrill of the nerves. At that moment he thought of the many people, both men and women, whom he had seen brought into the operating room. And he imagined he was feeling very much as they had felt then. He tried to brace himself, as they surely had tried to brace themselves, for the ordeal. It must be gone through. No possibility of escaping it. And he had himself arranged for it. He thought of that just then as an irony. That old man over there, a mere skeleton now, sunk low and drooping in

his chair, had been sacrificed by him, Artz, in order that this event might take place. And now he was dreading it, was almost sick with dread of it. In the dimness the orchestra was sounding, that dear family of the many voices which had always meant so much to him. The curtain went up revealing that other world in which for some hours the great audience would try to live. There was a whirlwind of applause.

Dr. Artz sat back staring, listening, not sharing in the applause. It simply did not occur to him as possible that he should make any physical demonstration because his patient had walked upon the stage, his patient pretending to be the warrior Rhadames. He was frozen in expectation. And at that moment he was terribly conscious of the nearness of Meyer, of Meyer in collapse, but with his bitter sense of wrong, his senile hatred, his longing for revenge, his still attacking spirit. Yes, the invisible spirit of the old Jew who had been accustomed to conquer and who, towards the close of his long and successful life, had been so wilfully defeated, was still an attacking spirit. In the dimness of the big theater Artz saw before him a spidery trail of ink—"I have not done with you, Artz"; and it seemed to him that Meyer's bitter intention—surely it was more than a desire—might have the power to bring revenge. While the deafening applause continued and Marakoff, looking on the stage tremendously tall, stood waiting for it to cease, though apparently not hearing it, Artz glanced towards the Meyers' box. He saw dimly a crouching meager form huddled against the curved partition. The suggestion of physical decrepitude, even in the darkness, was potent. Yet Artz felt Meyer's mind as intensely alive, full of meaning, ardent in desire for revenge.

And he was afraid. For at that moment he believed, almost with superstition, in the power of thought to influence.

At last the applause died away and was succeeded by an expectation felt by Artz as fierce. For a crowd is very cruel, more cruel than its units, unconsciously cruel because it demands much more than the individual but does not know that.

"Now, are you going to give us what we want of you, the supreme singing which we demand from *you*?"

The silence said that.

From the orchestra came the familiar accompaniment. Marakoff opened his lips. Artz sat up, stuck out his oddly shaped chest in the dark, tightened his whole body, listened. How he listened! Had he ever before really listened?

The voice came out above the orchestra, and it was powerful. No doubt about that. It was a big voice. It carried. Artz said to himself, "Splendid! Marvelous! What I have done!" The high note at the end of each of the three opening phrases rang out. There was no faltering. "Great!" said Artz to himself. "Great!"

And then a voice inside of him over which he had no control at all asked, "Is it great?"

And he remembered speaking to Carl Fügler out of the smoke in Marakoff's little Swiss room about the two voices in man, and how the one asserts and the other questions the assertion. Those two voices were now troubling him, were distracting him.

Marakoff went on singing. The dramatic talent in him was not impaired by time. He looked imposing, masterful. His personality dominated. Here was undoubtedly a man with a tremendous personality. And he was singing with a powerful voice, a powerful tenor voice.

But it began to seem to Artz that the hatred and intense desire for failure of the huddled old man in the box was interfering with things, was preventing what might be, what surely would be, if that hatred and desire could be abolished. It began to seem to Artz that a conflict was going on between Meyer and himself, a final conflict, and that he was not getting the best of it. There was something wrong with the powerful voice. Its strength was surely at moments out of complete control. And wasn't there something strange about the timbre?

Dr. Artz was genuinely musical. His love for and understanding of music were perhaps the most sincere things in him. In matters musical he was not easily deceived. Nor could he easily deceive himself.

When "Celeste Aïda" came to an end with a strong high

note which, it seemed, conquered the house—for there was a great outburst of applause—Artz sat very still in his box with his big head sunk between his powerful shoulders.

"What is it? What is the matter?"

His mind was full of questions. And it seemed to him that something in him tried to prevent them and that something in him refused to answer them. But there was surely something in him, too, deep down which knew, which simply could not help knowing, what the answers were.

Artz contained, too, one of those grim contests of which man is so often the home, worse than a family contest because of its mysterious loneliness, for only the man himself, the multifarious man takes part in it.

The first act came to an end. There was great applause. Marakoff was called many times, but he did not respond alone. He only appeared with other singers. The Aïda, Miss Mary Arden, shook his hand. Why did she shake his big hand with such persistence, as if determined to make the audience see how enthusiastic she was, how convinced she was of his triumph?

At last the applause ceased. The curtain remained down. A turbulence of talk broke loose in the big theater. Many people got up from their seats and went out to discuss the performance in the foyers.

Artz stayed alone in his box. No one came to visit him in it. He realized that evening that he was by no means a popular man in Zurich. But of course comparatively few of his fellow citizens had succeeded in getting seats. At least three-quarters of those in the reserved seats were people from distant places.

Artz sat for some minutes quite still, looking straight before him. Then he took his opera-glasses and glanced through them at the parterre. He saw Carl Fügler and Pauline. Carl was speaking. His strong face was red and looked excited. He was speaking with apparent vehemence. The expression on his face —it was surely angry. Beside him, in contrast to him, his very fair girlish wife looked strikingly pale.

While Artz was observing them through his opera-glasses

Carl got up abruptly and took his wife by the arm. He was still speaking and always with apparent excitement. Then she got up. She had a very light wrap of some kind with her. She took it, put it over her arm. They went out.

They were probably going to walk up and down outside the theater till the summoning bell sounded.

Artz laid down his glasses. He wanted to look towards the box in which Miss Anna and Meyer were sitting. But he tried to repress the inclination, refused to give way to it, stared about the theater, seeing very little, noticing scarcely anything.

People began to come back to their places. Orchestral players dribbled in one by one. A flautist was the first to appear. Then came a horn player, two violinists. A bell was audible, ringing persistently. To Artz it sounded neurotic. The tall figure of Herr Krohl came into the orchestra from the left. He stopped to speak to the leader of the orchestra, the first violin. Then he stepped up to his little raised platform holding his baton.

The second act would begin in a minute, and still Artz hadn't looked towards the box in which the Meyers were sitting. Why should he look towards it? There was no reason. He was certainly not going to look.

And then he looked—because he was compelled to look. Something compelled him.

Meyer had turned round in his box and his eyes were fixed upon Artz. As Artz moved his head he met their gaze and knew at once why he had been compelled. Meyer had compelled him; the action of Meyer upon him had been irresistible. So there was power still in the drooping old man! The two men only looked at each other for a brief instant before the lights went down for the second act. But it was long enough for revelation. As the flame of a candle sometimes spurts up before it flickers and goes out, so it seemed to Artz that in the incredibly old eyes of Meyer a dying flame rose and gleamed. "Senility—yes, that is near, close! Death itself is not far off! But you see—I had not done with you, Artz!"

The wild boast of a crazy old man. But as dimness came to the crowded theater Dr. Artz felt it as a simple statement of

fact. Meyer's hatred was surely operative, successfully operative. Meyer had won in the end.

While the second act was going on Artz peered down into the parterre. Two places were empty there, the seats of Carl Fügler and his wife. They remained empty throughout the rest of the performance.

During the duet in the tomb at the end of the last act Dr. Artz crept out of his box. He passed through the deserted vestibule, hurried down the steps of its portico, found his motor-car, got into it and said stridently to his chauffeur, "Go home!"

"Aïda" is a long opera. Between twelve and one o'clock that night when, in their little house in Goethestrasse, with the bright yellow bricks and the blue-purple shutters—Carl Fügler's taste—Carl and Pauline were still sitting up in a nimbus of smoke from Carl's sixth pipe, were still talking excitedly, there came a knock on the blue-purple front door. It was a heavy knock, and seemed to them both a large knock, bulky, weighty and somehow alarming, not because it was nocturnal but because of something in the knock itself, in its very nature.

Carl was saying, "I know! I know! But there is something dreadful about it. I do not know how to describe it, but everyone must feel it. It is powerful, of course. I should call it strident. To me it sounded almost like the voice of a monster singing. Wait!" He held up his big hand. "I know, Pauline! It is as if one were hearing a Robot singing! It suggested to me the voice of a Robot!"

Carl was saying that, had got so far, when the large knock came. He stopped speaking and looked at Pauline.

"Who can that be?" he said, in quite a different, a lowered, almost whispering voice. He pulled out his watch. "It is close upon one o'clock! Who—" The knock sounded again.

Pauline had got up. She looked frightened. "Can it—surely it can't be—could it be Dr. Artz?" she whispered.

"Artz! He would not dare to come here. He does not even bow to you." He stood for an instant. "I will go and see," he then said. And he went out of the little room.

He left the door open. Pauline followed him to the head of the narrow staircase and stood there anxiously listening.

She heard Carl's firm step in the passage, the noise of the door being unbolted, opened, and then a loud exclamation, astonished, dismayed. "Maestro!"

She caught hold of the stair rail.

"Yes, Carl! Yes, Testa Dura, it is I. And I find you up. That is good!" came up to her in Marakoff's voice. "And our lark, our Pauline, is she up, too?"

"Yes, maestro. Put your hat here."

"I could not get away sooner. People in my dressing-room. I took a taxicab."

"Where is it?"

"You did not hear it?"

"No."

"I have sent it away. I shall walk home, to get air. It seemed very hot in the theater. You did not come round to see me!"

"No, maestro." There was an instant of silence, broken by Carl's voice, uneven, faltering almost. "Do go up, maestro. Pauline is there."

"Good!"

Pauline saw the big form of her master slowly mounting the little inappropriate staircase. "Ah, my child!"

"Maestro!"

"But why are you flushing? What is the matter?" He was holding her hand in his big hand. "I have startled you?"

"We did not expect you," said Carl, hurriedly from behind.

"No? But I had expected you!"

"Sit down, maestro! Take this chair. You must be tired," urged Carl.

"No!"

"Anyhow sit down. And have some beer!"

But Marakoff remained standing, and stared down at Pauline. "You have been back here long?"

"Oh—for some time," said Pauline. "Dear maestro, do sit down—here!"

"How long?"

"I don't know exactly."

"Why do you look at Carl?"

"But I—"

"Did you walk up, Carl?"

"Yes—we did. We wanted air, too."

"And I drove. Then I suppose you were not here so very long before me? *Carl!*"

"Yes?"

"Were you?

"We walked fast, I dare say. Anyhow we have been here for some time. But why should you want to know, maestro? What does it matter?"

"I do want to know. It does matter to me. If not I should not ask. Tell me!"

Carl stood for a moment looking down. There was an expression of sheer agony on his brown face. At last he looked up and said, "We have been here for a long time."

"But how can that be? The opera—"

Carl thrust his hands into his pockets. There was sweat on his face. "Maestro, we did not stay till the end."

"You did not—" He turned to Pauline swiftly. "Ah, you felt ill. Your condition—I was afraid perhaps—that was it?"

Pauline shook her head, blushing deeply. There were tears in her eyes. She only just managed to prevent them from falling over her cheeks.

"No! Then—when did you leave the theater, Carl?"

"After the first act," Carl muttered.

"After the first act? After the first act!"

Marakoff stood for a moment like one deprived of the power of movement, yet able strangely to keep on his feet, like a standing paralytic. Then putting his hands behind him with a groping gesture of search he found a chair with his arms, lowered himself heavily into it, and sat there staring at them.

"So—that is how it is! I did not know for certain, but now I know. I suspected—yes. I was afraid. But they all—but what else could they do? But they do not love me! No! Only you two—you love me, and so you had to come away. You two

came away, because you love me. Dear children! What terrible true ways love has! O God, my dear God!"

A loud sob burst from him. He stretched out his hands, gave a hand to each, held on to them.

"I cannot help it! But no one else must know. Only you two —because you love me! It does not matter that you see! You may see. You are sincere. You love me. And so—and so you two—only you two!"

In the early morning, not long before dawn, when Marakoff at last had gone, striding down Goethestrasse with his big head held proudly up and the stars waning above it, Carl put his arm round Pauline's shoulders to draw her into their bedroom.

"I feel dead tired," he said. "What must you feel, Carina?"

"My eyes are tired—with crying."

"If it has done you harm! You must be careful, very, very careful, my little Carina! But how could we help it tonight?"

"We couldn't help it."

"Sometimes I feel a brute. To have stopped all your chance of singing! Only for a time, but still—"

"Is it only for a time, Carlo?"

"Why not? You do not mean—"

"No, no! I am not afraid. But perhaps when *it* has happened I shall not be as I was."

"You mean so ambitious, so determined to get on?"

"Yes. I don't feel the same now."

"I have altered you," Carl said, tenderly but triumphantly, too. "You were a lark, but now you are more than a lark."

"Perhaps I shall never sing as I meant to sing. *It* may change me."

She looked up at him. Her voice had held a note of sadness. Nevertheless as she looked her gray eyes were not sad.

"But even if it does—" she said.

When they went at last to their bedroom, in the big house at the corner of Kreuzstrasse Dr. Artz was lying stretched out

on the carpet of his library face downwards. The door was shut. His servants were in bed asleep. He had the room to himself.

The early dawn began to steal in. Still he lay there like one dead.

But Dr. Artz was not dead; he was only dead drunk.

THE END

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